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WINCHESTER

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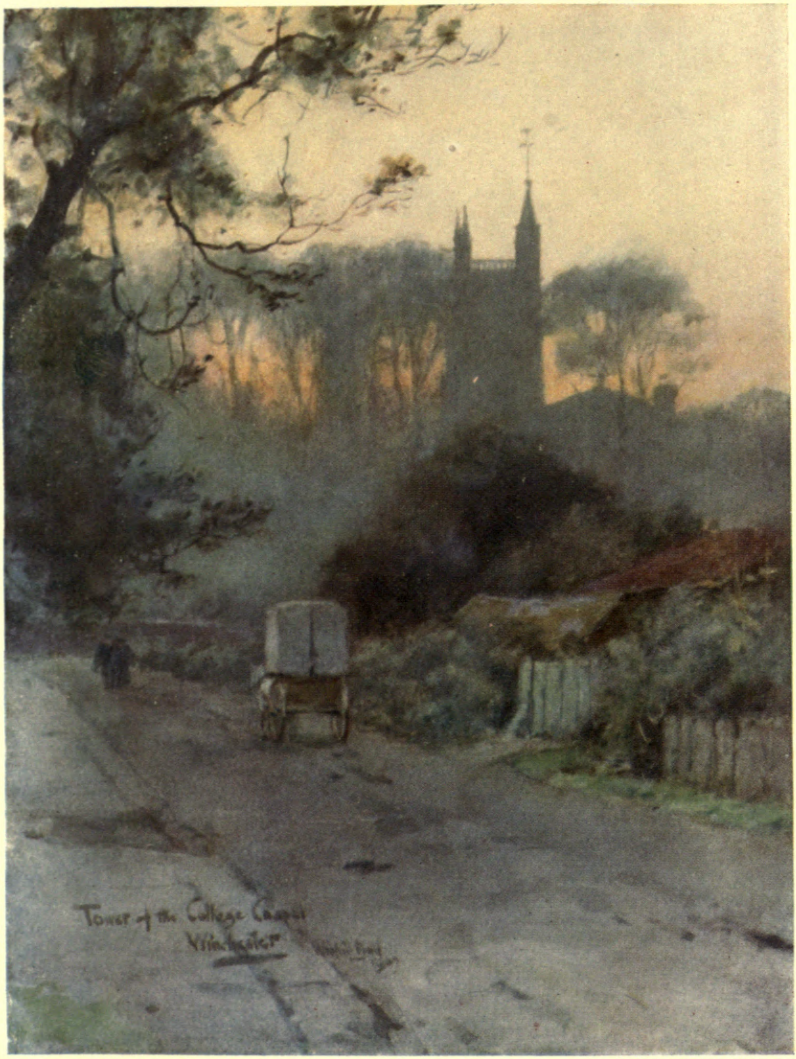
Tower of the College Church
Winchester

TOWER OF THE COLLEGE CHAPEL, WINCHESTER

The graceful pinnacles of 'Two Wardens Tower,' as the tower of College Chapel is called, forms a picturesque feature in all views of the south-eastern quarter of the city. Originally built by Warden Thurburn in 1488, it was rebuilt in 1863, in memory of two well-known later wardens, Barter, Warden of Winchester, and Williams, Warden of New.

The view is taken from near Wharf Bridge.

WINCHESTER

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Preface

THE following volume treats in somewhat fuller detail the Winchester sections of the larger work on Hampshire published last year under similar auspices. Where much of the ground traversed is identical much has been necessarily repeated, and a considerable portion of what follows is little more than an amplification of what has been already dealt with in the earlier volume.

The present work in no way aims at being a history, though much of it is cast into a historical mould. Still less is it a guide-book. Its aim has been selective, and it makes no pretence to completeness. In following out some of the numerous avenues of Winchester interest, which seem to open out continually in fresh and unsuspected directions as soon as one commences to wander through her confines, many have received but a cursory examination, and many more have been entirely ignored. The author can only hope his readers will be able to accompany

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him with pleasurable interest along those which inclination and circumstance have led him to explore.

The authorities consulted have been numerous, and from the following published sources of information, as well as many others, valuable information has been obtained :—

Bede, *The English Chronicle*, The Winton Domesday, *The Liber de Hyda*, Rudborne's *Major Historia Wintoniae*, various of the *Annales Monastici*, the valuable historical documents published some time back by the Hampshire Record Society, Milner's History, Mr. Kirby's and Mr. Leach's volumes on Winchester College, Dean Kitchin's *Winchester* in the Historic Towns Series, and Adams's *Wykehamica*. The author regrets that, through a *lapsus calami*, the title of Bramston and Leroy's *Historic Winchester* was misapplied in the Hampshire volume to Dr. Kitchin's book. For this error he here apologises. Finally, the author wishes here to express his thanks to many friends who in various ways have assisted him in what has been to him a most pleasant task, viz., that of serving in some degree, though but inadequately, as chronicler to his adopted city.

THE AUTHOR.

WINCHESTER, *June* 1910.

Contents

CHAPTER I

PAGE

'Wyngester, That Joly Citè' 1

CHAPTER II

Early Days 10

CHAPTER III

The Roman Occupation 15

CHAPTER IV

Saxon Winchester 20

CHAPTER V

The Capital of England 26

CHAPTER VI

Alfred 34

CHAPTER VII

Alfred's Death and Sixty Years after 43

Winchester

CHAPTER VIII

PAGE

Æthelwold, Saint and Bishop 49

CHAPTER IX

The Capital of the Danish Empire 59

CHAPTER X

Norman Winchester 73

CHAPTER XI

Later Norman Days 87

CHAPTER XII

A Great Bishop, Henry of Blois 100

CHAPTER XIII

Angevin and Plantagenet 109

CHAPTER XIV

Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century Winchester . . 117

CHAPTER XV

The Monastic Life 130

Contents

CHAPTER XVI

PAGE

The Cathedral 146

CHAPTER XVII

The College 158

CHAPTER XVIII

Wolvesey—St. Cross—The Castle Hall—The Round Table 168

CHAPTER XIX

Winchester in Literature 181

INDEX 197

List of Illustrations

		FACING PAGE
1.	Tower of the College Chapel, Winchester	*Frontispiece*
2.	St. Catherine's Hill, Winchester	9
3.	Shawford Mill	16
4.	The Weirs, Winchester	25
5.	Hamble	32
6.	At Itchen Abbas	41
7.	High Street, Winchester	48
8.	St. Peter's, Cheesehill, Winchester	57
9.	Church of St. Cross	64
10.	King's Gate, Winchester	73
11.	Martyr Worthy	80
12.	Watersplash at Itchen Stoke	89
13.	Easton	96
14.	The Deanery, Winchester	105
15.	Cheyney Court and Close Gate, Winchester	112
16.	Brewhouse, Winchester College	121
17.	Middle Gate, Winchester College	128
18.	Cloisters and Fromond's Chantry, Winchester College	137
19.	Memorial Gateway, Winchester College	144
20.	Second Master's House, Winchester College	153
21.	Tower of Ambulatory, Hospital of St. Cross, Winchester	160
22.	Church of St. Lawrence, Winchester	169
23.	Hursley Vicarage	176
24.	Winchester from St. Giles's Hill	184

WINCHESTER

CHAPTER I

'WYNGESTER, THAT JOLY CITÈ'

Me lyketh ever, the lengerè the bet,
By Wyngester, that Joly citè.
The ton is god and wel y-set,
The folk is comely on to see ;
The aier is god both inne and oute,
The citè stent under an hille ;
The riverès renneth all aboute,
The ton is ruelèd upon skille.
Benedicamus Domino,
Alleluia,
Alleluia.

Fifteenth-century verses, DE WALDEN MSS.

THE magic of the city—whence comes it? Every people, every age has felt it, this mysterious sense of personality, this deep, alluring spell which age after age, nation after nation, has woven round the city of its dreams. Rome, Naples, Damascus, Mecca, Seville, each of these has been and still is a name to conjure with, while the long pent-up fervour of national feeling with which the Hebrew of old time invested the thought of Salem, the City of Peace, has from its very

intensity and sincerity established it in the eyes of all Christendom as the permanent type of that New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City, the centre of all divine influence and of every divine appeal.

And here in England, dull, matter-of-fact, money-grubbing England, have we not too, under our leaden skies, cities also not unworthy of a claim on our regard—cities which possess the same picturesque and appealing elements which have, in people of warmer and more emotional type, evoked such feelings of romantic devotion, of national pride, and the rich glow of enthusiastic attachment? True, such feelings express themselves here in less exuberant and conscious manner, but they exist, and have existed all through our history, and the old fifteenth-century singer quoted above, whose quaintly expressive verses sum up so happily even for us of modern time the attractions of the delightful old mediaeval city which is our common theme, was doubtless one who felt this to the full. 'Wyngester, that Joly citè,' that is his keynote—a note at once sincere but restrained.

He is no pilgrim, rapt in enthusiastic devotion, singing of

urbs caelestis, urbs beata,

as he approaches the city of his passionate desire; but a plain, sober-minded citizen, who sees in the town which shelters him a 'Joly citè' of attractive aspect and pleasantly seated, surrounded by the mingled delights of hill and stream; and, moreover, one 'ruelèd upon skille,' as becomes the mother of municipalities.

And to lovers of Winchester—and who that knows it is not of these ?—it must ever be a pleasant task to follow out in detail the themes suggested by our mediaeval singer—to enjoy one by one those attractive features which endear it still to us, as it did to him. To clamber up the breezy heights which gird it round, for the sake of the 'aier'—that air which, as the poet Keats himself remarked, is alone worth "Sixpence a pint"; to trace the windings of the 'riverès renning all aboute'—both within its confines and beyond; to linger in its streets and catch the echoes of its wonderful past, with even more appreciation than our fifteenth-century poet was capable of feeling. For our singer, sincerely appreciative as he was, had one sense lacking —the sense of history. The present only appealed to him; but to us, as we thread its quaintly-inconvenient, narrow streets, its passages and gateways, it is something more than merely a 'Joly citè,' a city of comfort and good rule; it is a city of dreams as well, a city haunted with the sense of a mighty past, a living testimony alike to the permanence of our national institutions and to the dignity of the associations to which they make appeal.

Winchester, then, is a city with an atmosphere—an atmosphere of the reality and range of historic things, through which the gazing eye can peer, mile after mile as it were, till it loses itself in a vaguely distant and indistinct horizon, where the mists of myth and legend blur the outline and mingle inextricably together fact and fancy, record and surmise.

For in Winchester antique tradition and historic association are not a mere adjunct or picturesque accident: they are the keynote of its very existence. In Winchester we stand on the threshold of national history; here we may, as it were, study history *in situ*, as perhaps we can study it nowhere else in the land—in the soil beneath our feet, in its stones, its institutions, its quaint survivals of early or mediaeval, Tudor or Stuart days.

Where else but in Winchester can we meet with so many picturesque reminders of an ancient feudal past,—reminders which have survived not because they are merely picturesque, but simply because here they have not outlived their usefulness or natural appropriateness? The Cathedral bedesmen, the brethren of St. Cross, the scholars of 'Sainte Marie College,' the almsmen of Beaufort's Order of Noble Poverty, the brethren of Christe's Hospitall, the masters of the College, and the college queristers also, the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the diocese with their quaintly uncomfortable attire,—each and all of these wear their distinctive garb as a matter of course, just as centuries ago every one wore the garb distinctive of his rank or occupation. Anywhere else one of these might excite remark: here they pass unnoticed. They are part of the place, part of the spirit of the past, which, dead elsewhere, here survives in vigour and undiminished vitality.

Here was the cradle of Saxon rule and Saxon civilization; here also the cradle of national historical record. Here Saxon Alfred ruled and prayed and wrought; here

Danish Cnut took the golden crown from his brow and laid it in token of humility upon the Holy Altar; here Norman William wore his crown yearly at Easter-tide; here Curfew first was pealed, and here ever since it has continued to peal; here Rufus was buried, "many looking on and few grieving"; here Henry I. ruled and earned the title of the 'Lion of Justice'; here Matilda fought with Stephen in the dark days of civil warfare; here John received the papal absolution, having sunk the English crown to a lower depth than any other sovereign either would or could have done; here Henry III. was born, and here he held wild revel; here later on was founded the great college of William of Wykeham, whose motto—"Manners makyth man"—has served as an inspiration for generations of public school boys for over 500 years; here Henry VIII. welcomed and fêted the puissant Emperor and second Charlemagne, Charles V.; here his daughter Mary was married to a Spanish prince; here James I. kept his Court, and here Raleigh received his shameful condemnation and sentence; here, with alternate fortune, Cavalier and Roundhead strove together, till Cromwell himself captured its citadel and razed its fortifications to the ground; here Charles II. repeatedly kept his Court; here he presented the Corporation with his own portrait, and it may even be, left the citizens to pay for the gift—for the Merry Monarch was often forgetful, and always short of money; here was perpetrated the most infamous, perhaps, of all the crimes of the terrible Bloody Assize, the judicial

murder of Dame Alice Lisle for an act of natural humanity; here died and here was laid to rest that most charming and natural of women novelists, the bright and vivacious Jane Austen.

Yes, if a poet could do for Winchester what Longfellow did for Bruges, and could conjure up the scenes of the past and the personages whose memories still linger here, what a rare series of absorbing pictures, what a medley of historic personalities, what a wealth of varied types should we see embodied before our eyes! Rude Belgic tribesmen of pre-Roman days, Roman legionaries, rough, wild Berserkers and Danish vikings, Saxon thegns and Norman knights, abbots and priors, merchants and gildsmen, friars and pilgrims, —these and many more would contend for our notice, mingled with kings and queens, prelates and chancellors, bishops and cardinals. If historical memories can sanctify any spot in the realm, surely Winchester must be sacred soil.

To separate Winchester from the history which is enshrined within her is a thing impossible and unthinkable. It is in the light of her historic past alone that Winchester can be rightly viewed; and attractive and fair as are her buildings and her natural surroundings, it is only in their historical setting that they can be adequately appreciated.

Let us, before we set foot within any of her streets, endeavour to get some general mental picture of the city in which so many associations are centred and enshrined; let us take our stand on the bold hill

which dominates the city towards the east, St. Giles's Hill. Had we mounted up here on the 1st of September—the feast of St. Egidius—some six or seven centuries ago, it would have been a busy and motley throng that we should have had to elbow our way through. Englishmen from every county, foreigners from every land—Frenchmen, Germans, Poles, and Jews—all mingled together in hopeless confusion. A city in miniature—street after street of wooden booths, all enclosed in a wooden wall or palisade—would meet the eye. And the inhabitants! What varied types should we see—merchants and chapmen, citizens and countrymen, pedlars and ballad-mongers, all eager and excited, bargaining, jesting, quarrelling—a babel of tongues, peoples, and languages; while here and there a bailiff or officer wearing a bishop's mitre figured on his livery passes along and scrutinizes the merchandise. No friendly reception does he meet with, for this is the Great Fair held in honour of St. Giles, where merchants from all parts of Europe congregate to buy the wool for which the south of England is so famous, and during the sixteen days that the fair lasts no merchant or shopman in Winchester, or ten miles round, may buy or sell except within the fair itself, and whoever is a welcome and popular figure, it is not the Lord Bishop of Winchester nor the bishop's bailiff, for all merchandise must first pay toll—and heavy toll—for the bishop's exclusive benefit, before it may pass within the barriers, and be exposed for sale.

But to-day it will be the city, lying at our feet to

the westward, which will interest us, and there will be nothing on the hill to turn our attention from it as we note its chief points one by one. It is a beautiful picture of mingled red and grey that lies before us. The Cathedral—a mass of grey stone—here presents its most interesting aspect to us : a mass of grey stone set with pinnacles and flying buttresses and heavy square tower. To its left lies the College, hidden partly behind the trees of the Close and the Deanery garden, the light, graceful 'Two Wardens' tower of its chapel contrasting strikingly with the solid tower of the Cathedral—a noticeable and attractive object. Almost between the two lies a green patch of meadow, with grey walls and ruins round it. This is Wolvesey, with its memories of Alfred and the English Chronicle. Beyond Wolvesey and the College we shall see St. Cross, like the Cathedral in outward form, but a cathedral in miniature. Close at our feet in the foreground lie the Guildhall, with its clock, and the statue of the great Alfred, and the line of the High Street can be clearly followed till it terminates with the West Gate at its far extremity. On either side of the city are seen the many channels of the river Itchen—here and there rises the tower or spire of one of the numerous city churches—and far away on the high ground to the left appears a clump of trees which, under the name of 'Oliver's Battery,' recalls the thought of the grim Lord Protector to us. It is a pleasant and, indeed, poetic picture at any period of the year, and perhaps most poetic on an afternoon in late autumn, when the

ST. CATHERINE'S HILL, WINCHESTER

The fine bold chalk hill which dominates the river valley to the South of Winchester, has memories of early Celtic days, of Cnut, and of the *ancien régime* at Winchester College. Round its summit is the 'ring' of the great refuge camp of præ-Roman days which it is estimated required some 3000 people to defend it. Cnut made a grant of 'Hille' and other lands to the old minster. On the summit there was once a pilgrimage chapel dedicated to St. Catherine. St. Catherine's Hill was formerly the playing area for College boys on 'remedies' or holidays, and the curious 'mismaze' cut on its summit is supposed to have been their handiwork.

light smoke from the houses and the thin mists from the river have mingled together to weave a silvery grey network, through which the details of the city seem, as it were, to filter slowly and dreamily—a harmony of haze and mist, to which the imagination can most sympathetically attune itself, a vague dream-land scene which fancy seems almost naturally to repeople with the shadows of the past.

CHAPTER II

EARLY DAYS

Et penitus toto orbe divisos Britannos.

ANTIQUITY and long-continued vitality such as have fallen to Winchester—for to go back to its early humble beginnings takes us back very far indeed—lead us naturally to look for causes, and prompt the questions, Why, in the first instance, did a human community settle here at all? What through so many alternations of human vicissitude and political circumstance has operated to maintain these intact? *Tempus edax rerum*—Time, the devourer of constituted things, is written not so much on its stones, as in its stones, yet Winchester remains Winchester still. For, be it noted, there is nothing in the nature of things which gives to cities and communities any prescriptive claim or assurance of permanence. We have not, indeed, to travel far from Winchester to find instructive instances, to the very contrary, among its earliest neighbours and contemporaries. Silchester, Sarum, Portchester, its early British contemporaries, which once flourished even as Winchester,

have long since sunk, the last named into inanition, the two former into dissolution so complete that no trace now remains, save what little the ploughshare or the antiquary may from time to time unearth ; and that little would probably, but for the worms' unceasing activity, have long since perished beyond recall. For with cities, as with the animal world, the secret of continued vigour is the secret of continued adaptation to environment ; towns and cities, like other organized existences, are just as old as the arteries which feed them, and as long as function is efficiently performed, so long will there be health to perform it.

And yet as years go, Winchester is old,—how old none can say. Ancient Neolithic interments on St. Giles's Hill, old Celtic barrows on Morne (*Magdalen*) Hill behind, carry us back far indeed beyond the days of permanent settlement, and her continuous existence goes back far beyond the days of any written historical record, yet all these years she has retained her identity and her vigour unimpaired. What physical causes have contributed to this we shall perhaps be better able to appreciate if we quit St. Giles's Hill and clamber up to the top of St. Catherine's Hill, the bold chalk hill which dominates the view southward from the city. An interesting hill it is, with modern associations which we will not stop to consider now, but turn our thoughts to the view before us. Below us is a flat-bottomed valley, a mile or two across, with the numerous winding channels of the river intersecting the water meadows at our feet. To our north lies the city, seen from this point to

excellent advantage, occupying the flat of the valley, and creeping up the hill slopes on either side, while far away in the distance the chalk upland seems to roll away, ridge succeeding ridge, till all detail is lost in distance.

Two thousand years or more ago, the country which we are now gazing over would have borne a fundamentally different character, though its superficial aspect, viewed from this point, might not, apart from signs of human agency, have been so very dissimilar. For at that time practically the whole of the south of England, through all the lower levels, was a wild stretch of brake and forest all but impenetrable, the haunt of wolf and wild boar, of beaver and badger, alternating at the lowest points with swamps and morasses, which formed the beds of the valleys, and either fringed the edges of the streams or mingled composedly with them. This was the great Weald Forest, of which a few detached patches still remain—a tangled sea of green, beneath which all lay submerged save the chalk heights, the North and South Downs, Salisbury Plain, and the mid Hampshire plateau over which we are now looking.

At one spot, and practically one spot only, was this forest barrier broken, and that was in mid Hampshire, where the great estuary of Southampton Water and the Vale of Itchen pierced it like a wedge, and gave fairly free access from the coast to the rich midland counties to the north. And so up or by this natural highway the stream of immigration from the south flowed. Celtic peoples from the north of Europe, Goidels,

Brythons, Belgans,—all in turn came this way, and here it was, where the Vale of Itchen narrowed, that a settled community began to form—a ganglionic point, as all such communities are, along the nervous thread of intercourse and communication.

Down then in the valley at our feet, on the actual ground where our city now stands, amid the morasses wherein peat abounded, and where even now it may still be found, was the first settlement or village of Winchester—a collection of rude hovels, of wattle-work covered with mud, and stockaded with a stout timber palisading as additional protection, while the hill-top, where we now stand, was converted into a fortress or refuge-camp, to all appearance impregnable, so long as heart and hand still existed to defend it.

Of the village below all trace has long vanished, but the lines of the earthwork round the hill remain still broadly scarped out, and seemingly imperishable. No mean achievement this—this great rampart over 1000 yards in circuit, and still 25 feet or more in height in places ; and when the feebleness of the resources with which those early Celtic sappers and miners worked is borne in mind, the unserviceable pick of deer antler, the absence of means of transport, we wonder more and more at the magnitude of the achievement which has had such permanent result.

They dreamt not of a perishable home, who thus could build,

and to-day, though two, perhaps three, thousand years have passed since it first gave security to the

primitive Winchester settlement below, the great camp still remains, keeping watch over the modern city like a sentinel forgotten, but still under orders, whom no change of guard has relieved.

One other inheritance, besides these piled-up ramparts, these first Winchester burghers have left us, and that is a name. Cær Gwent, the Celtic name, first Romanized into Venta Belgarum, passed in Saxon days into Vintan-ceastir, or Venta the fortified, and so on by a natural transition has become the Winchester of to-day. What the name means is a venerable antiquarian puzzle, on which we prefer to hazard no opinion, nor indeed does it greatly matter. The name, like the city itself, is venerable in antiquity, and its origin, like that of the city itself, is lost in the mists of the past.

And as we look round about us from this hill-top, and direct our eye up and down this valley, we begin to realize what it is that has made Winchester what it has been in the past, and what it is now: not merely the accident of circumstance, the flotsam and jetsam of human migratory tribes, floated fortuitously hither on the tidal waters of our southern estuaries and here casually deposited, but a natural centre in a great continuous stream of humanity, in which Celt and Belgan, Roman, Saxon, Dane, and Norman have all pushed forward, each eager to bear his part in the building of that great national polity, the England of to-day.

CHAPTER III

THE ROMAN OCCUPATION

Foursquare to all the winds.

THE part played by physical causes, outlined above, is illustrated by the successive stages in the Roman occupation. The two first invasions by Julius Caesar were little more than desultory raids ; the next, under Aulus Plautius and Vespasian in A.D. 43, had important and permanent results. Pevensey (*Anderida*), Portchester (*Portus Magnus*), and Southampton (*Clausentum*) were all occupied in turn ; up the Itchen valley the invaders came, and its strategic position made them choose Venta Belgarum as their military base in the south of England.

History is silent as to the actual occupation of Venta, but Bede and others mention the occupation of the Isle of Wight, and the silence of Roman writers on this point merely makes it clear that little resistance was encountered here. Nor does Roman literature give us any account of Venta ; the only mention of it is in the Antonine Itineraries, the great road-book

of the Roman Empire, dating probably from about 320 A.D. ; but its importance in Roman days is to be inferred from the remains the Romans have left behind, as well as from Bede and other indirect evidence.

No Roman structure, except, perhaps, some part of the ancient wall still existing, remains above ground now, but the site of the city, as marked out by the Romans, still remains clearly shown, and the spade and pick-axe are continually bringing to light evidences of what Winchester was like in Roman days.

The Roman city formed a rectangle aligned almost exactly with the four points of the compass. Intersecting it from north to south was the great highway leading to Clausentum, and another road, practically corresponding to the present High Street, crossed this at right angles, dividing the whole area of the city into four rectangular blocks or tesserae. All round this area was a wall of stout masonry, with gates at the four points where the two main highways pierced it ; upon the same lines were reared later the walls of the Norman city, and their general direction is clearly traceable now. A walk along Westgate Lane, North walls, Eastgate Street, the Weirs (where portions of the ancient wall may still be seen), College Street, Canon Street, and St. James's Lane, would practically carry us round the circuit of the Roman as it would of the later mediaeval city.

The temples of the gods occupied the south-eastern area where the Cathedral now stands, and a well in the Cathedral crypt is pointed out to visitors as having

SHAWFORD MILL

Shawford Mill, near Shawford. The river channels here are fringed in summer-time with mimulus, yellow iris, and forget-me-not, and are delightful to ramble along.

been connected with heathen worship in Roman times. Numerous pieces of tesselated pavement, vases, urns, and votive objects generally, articles of adornment, for household use and the toilet, are frequently found even still, mingled with innumerable coins and relics of a military nature.

More important still are the Roman roads which led from Winchester, the routes of which are still unmistakable, and which remain the great enduring monument both of the Roman occupation and of the Roman civilizing instinct. Indeed, the chief service the Roman occupation did for Winchester was to bring it into effective contact with the rest of the country. The Belgic tribesmen had no common organization or polity; a number of scattered and incoherent units linked together merely by the accident of position, and a more or less common racial descent, they resembled one of the lower animal forms, not possessing a common nerve centre, but controlled by local ganglia and responding merely to local stimuli. The Roman genius was to link up the whole land into one united organism and to supply a nervous and arterial system regulated by central control. Law and Order were the great lessons it taught the world, and open and secure lines of communication were the necessary preliminary of the *Pax Romana*. No succeeding age save our own has so fully recognized the value of good and effective road communication. Our modern roads and tracks very often merely follow routes first marked out by Roman hands, and the

common occurrence of the title 'High Street,' generally applied to the leading thoroughfare of town or village, is a constant reminder to us of the debt we owe to the Romans.

Radiating from Venta Belgarum were no less than five thoroughfares, of which four were undoubtedly important arteries. The first led to the sea, to Clausentum, the port. It followed the line of the existing Southampton road as far as Otterbourne, and then straight on through Stoneham (the *ad Lapidem* of Bede) to Clausentum. This road passed straight through the city from south to north, and from the northern gate of the city it branched off into two, one going north-east, along the existing Basingstoke road to Silchester (*Calleva Attrebatum*), the other north-west, following the line of the existing Andover road to Cirencester (*Durocornovium*). Both these roads can be still traced for a distance of a good many miles from Winchester. The fourth led directly west to Sarum, and can still be followed as a well-defined track all the way. The fifth led to Portchester (*Portus Magnus*) over Deacon Hill, and through Morestead, but with the exception of the first few miles all trace of it is now lost.

Details of some of these roads as given in the Antonine Itinerary already mentioned are quoted below, and the names of the stations and their distances apart are of more than usual interest, particularly from the assistance they give us as regards identification of the Roman sites.

Londinium (*London*) to Pontes (*Staines*), mille passuum (*miles*)	xxii
Pontes to Calleva Attrebatum (*Silchester*) .	xxii
Calleva to Venta Belgarum	xxii
Venta to Clausentum (*Southampton*) . .	x
Clausentum to Portus Magnus (*Portchester*) .	x

The Roman routes are not comfortable to follow now, particularly to the cyclist; their course is invariably straight, leading direct from point to point, over hill and valley alike, without regard to gradient or the lie of the land. The appeal they make to the thoughtful imagination is distinct and striking. Direct and uncompromising, they follow their course regardless of obstacles, suggesting irresistibly the genius and energy of the imperious people who met difficulties only to subdue them. Primarily imperial in character, if not always military, few things conduced so much to the settlement and growth in civilization of the land. Commerce followed in the wake of security, and the arts of war ministered thus as handmaid to those of peace.

CHAPTER IV

SAXON WINCHESTER

Post tenebras, lux

THE Roman occupation lasted some 400 years, after which Winchester history becomes a blank, and it is not the settlement and conquest of the next occupiers, the Gewissas or West Sexe, but their conversion to Christianity which begins to dispel the historical just as it did the spiritual darkness of the period.

Of these years, could we but trust the romantic pages of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who has preserved for us the legendary stories of the period as preserved in the early Welsh tradition which he followed out, we might have a complete and circumstantial history, telling us of Arthur and his Knights, of Merlin, and Uther Pendragon, all focussed round our own Hampshire country, with Winchester and Silchester as the chief centres of action.

Thus arose the mediaeval tradition connecting Winchester with Arthur and the Knights of the Round

Table—a tradition consolidated by the presence in the great Hall of Winchester of the curious relic which popular imagination has for hundreds of years identified with the actual Round Table round which that famous brotherhood feasted. But of this more anon. And attractive as are the speculations into which Geoffrey of Monmouth might lead us, we must put him sternly by till some greater hand has winnowed the grain—for some grain his record undoubtedly possesses—from the chaff of credulity, if not of deliberate invention.

And so for 200 years our Winchester history remains a blank, till the Saxon invader had in turn made his way hither, by the same natural channel which Celt and Roman before him had followed, and a kingdom of Wessex had grown up, rude and barbarous, but firmly planted, with the Hame-tun (*Southampton*) as its first capital, till, with the growth of institutions, the natural advantages of Winchester made it in turn the centre of rule of the West Saxon kingdom.

How Jute and Angle warred in turn with Saxon and with one another : how order was gradually evolved, and Christianity planted in Britain by Augustine and his band of monks, we cannot here pursue in detail. It is the coming of Christianity to Hampshire that immediately concerns us, and with this a new chapter of great interest opens in our Winchester story.

Augustine had landed in Kent in 597, and it is a noteworthy fact that while Christianity had spread gradually thence to the East Saxons, to Northumbria,

and to East Anglia, the stream of influence from Canterbury had, as it were, flowed by and left Wessex, Sussex, and Mercia entirely untouched, so effectually had the natural barriers of the forest belt isolated the south-west of England from Kent and even London ; and when at length Christianity was brought to Wessex it was by a special mission from Italy and not from Canterbury at all that the message came. Thus the founding of the Church in Wessex was an act independent entirely of Augustinian influence ; not for many years after did the diocese acknowledge the supremacy of Canterbury, and when Bishop Henry of Blois in the twelfth century was scheming to convert Winchester into a separate province, with himself as Archbishop, he had at least a historical basis on which to rest his claim. Sussex and Mercia were evangelized later still, and the Isle of Wight last of all.

There is indeed a local tradition which connects the name of Augustine with Winchester. In Avington Park, some five miles from the city, a moribund oak still stands, known as the Gospel Oak, from the tradition that Augustine himself preached the Gospel under it. But the tradition is entirely unsupported, and certain it is that, even if it were true, the preaching had no permanent result.

The story of the conversion of the Gewissas is told by Bede, and deserves to be translated in full.

At that time (*A.D. 634, English Chronicle*), during the reign of King Kynegils, the race of the West Saxons, anciently termed Gewissas, received the faith of Christ, which was

preached to them by Birinus, who had come to Britain at the instance of Pope Honorius. His intention had indeed been to proceed direct into the heart of the land of the Angles, where as yet no teacher had penetrated, in order there to sow the seeds of the faith. For which purpose, and by direction of the Pope himself, he was consecrated Bishop by Asterius, Bishop of Genoa. But on his arrival in Britain, and coming in contact first of all with the Gewissas, he found them everywhere to be in a state of the grossest heathenism, and so he considered it to be more profitable to preach the Word to them, rather than to go farther to seek a field to labour in.

The actual conversion of King Kynegils took place the year after, not at Winchester, but at Dorchester, near Oxford, on the river Thames. Here Birinus first placed his bishop's stool ; but Bede's narrative directly implies that he visited Winchester and dedicated a Christian church there, which only a bishop could do ; for he goes on to say that

having erected and dedicated many churches, and having by his pious ministrations called many unto the Lord, he departed himself to Him and was buried in that city (*Dorchester*), and many years after, by the instrumentality of Bishop Hædda (*bishop from 676 to 703 A.D.*), his body was translated thence to the city of Venta and placed in the church of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul,

which he himself had dedicated.

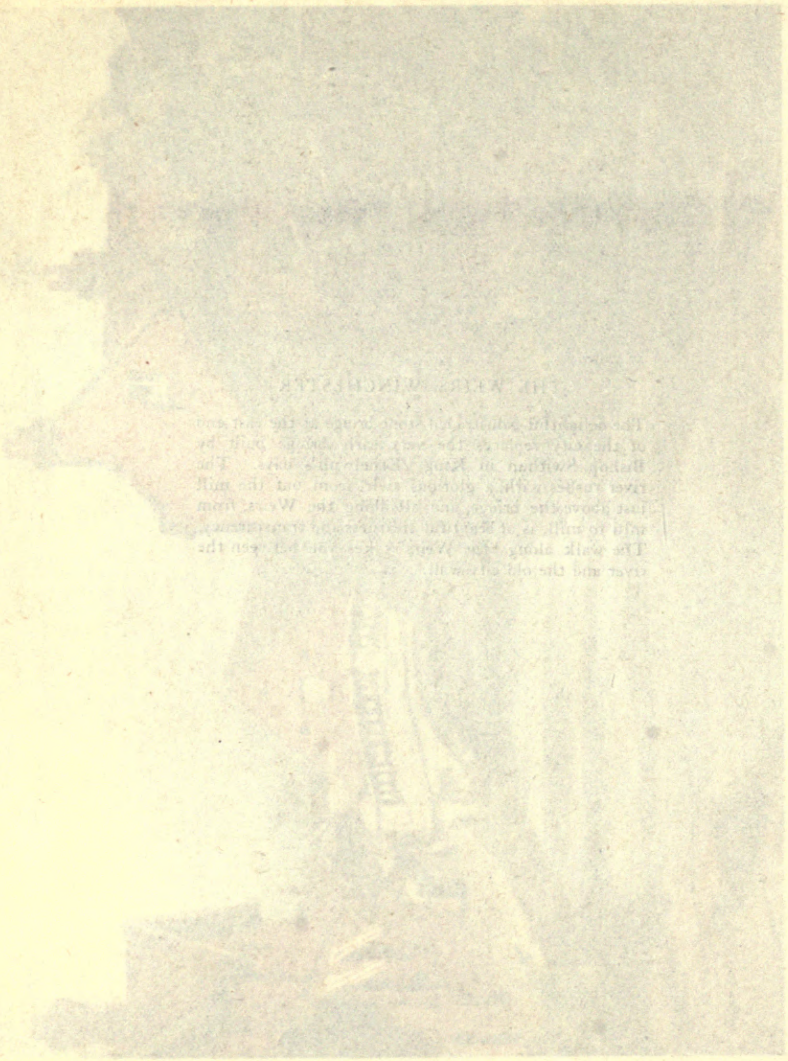
We learn from the *English Chronicle* that this Christian church was erected not by Kynegils, who died in 643, but by Kenwalh or Kenulphus his son. Here then we have the beginning in a sense of the Winchester Cathedral of to-day. True, successive and more

glorious buildings have been erected on the same site, but they have been but the successors in direct line of that primitive church of St. Peter and St. Paul, rudely constructed, and possibly roofed with thatch, which Birinus dedicated; and the bones of its two founders, father and son—for so we are entitled to regard them—are traditionally preserved in the Cathedral to-day, in two of the beautiful mortuary chests above the side screens of the choir.

What a link with the past do the inscriptions on these chests afford us, for the facts are perfectly historical whatever the identity of the bones may be. What imagination is there that cannot be deeply stirred in the very presence, as it were, of these two West Saxon chiefs Kynegils and Kenwalh in the very church which Birinus himself first erected, and which was dedicated to the service of God by Birinus himself? Nor was this all, for in A.D. 648, side by side with the church, was erected a monastery, the beginning of that religious house afterwards so famous as the Priory of St. Swithun. Kynegils endowed it with an important grant of land—nothing less than all the King's land for several miles round Winchester, the first church endowment in Wessex of which we have any authentic record; an endowment all the more memorable as some portion of this land, in and around the adjoining present parish of Chilcomb, remained after some twelve and a half centuries of consecutive church tenure in possession of the Dean and Chapter of Winchester, the successors in direct line of the religious community

THE WEIRS, WINCHESTER

The delightful balustraded stone bridge at the east end of the city replaces the very early bridge built by Bishop Swithun in King Æthelwulf's days. The river rushes with a glorious swirl from out the mill just above the bridge, and all along the Weirs, from mill to mill, is of beautiful clearness and transparency. The walk along 'the Weirs' takes you between the river and the old city wall.



of St. Peter and St. Paul, right up indeed to 1899, when it was taken over by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The development of Winchester during the early Saxon period was steady and continuous. This was marked in 676 by the transference by Bishop Hædda of the Bishop's stool from Dorchester to Winchester, and from this point onwards Winchester became the centre of the diocese as well as the capital of rule—a great diocese, spreading far and wide over all the western country. When Danihel succeeded Hædda—"Danihel the most revered bishop of the West Saxons," as his contemporary Bede calls him—the diocese was divided, and Sherborne became the centre of the western, as Winchester was of the eastern see. And so Winchester history is brought down to the days of our first really contemporary historian, the Venerable Bede.

The pages of Bede are full of interest, not only for the light they throw on the early history of Saxon Winchester, but also because incidentally they establish its identity with the earlier township of Roman and Belgan days, for, as already noted, he speaks of it as "the city of Venta, which is called by the Saxon people *Vintanceastir*," *i.e.* Venta the fortified, implying that the Roman defences round the city were still in existence, and giving us the first mention in recorded history of that name of our city, which by a simple and natural transition has become the name by which we know it still.

CHAPTER V

THE CAPITAL OF ENGLAND

This royal throne of kings . . .
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth.

With the dawn of the ninth century came further development. During the 200 years or so of the so-called Heptarchy, a gradual and continuous movement of cohesion—social as well as political—had been in progress. The strength of the Anglo-Saxon was his courage, a determination and persistence hardly distinguishable from obstinacy ; his weakness was his lack of imagination and his narrow political horizon. He had never learnt to think nationally, hardly even tribally, far less imperially ; his thoughts centred themselves in the little hamlet or home settlement where all were kin at least, if not kind. He took

the rustic murmur of his bourg
For the great wave that echoed round the world.

And if he thought of his fellow-countrymen at all, apart from family blood-feuds which called for vengeance, it was probably in the exclusive spirit of Jacques :

I do desire we may be better strangers.

These individualistic ideas were being slowly modified by existing conditions : families had been grouped into tythings, tythings into hundreds, hundreds into shires ; the communal system of land tenure was merging into the manorial system, and with the consolidation of individual kingdoms came a struggle for political supremacy and a movement towards national cohesion and unity. It was the glory of a Wessex king, ruling in Winchester, to render this conception an accomplished fact.

It was at the Court of the great Charlemagne that Egbert gained his political training and insight. Forced as a youth to flee from Wessex, he had been made welcome at the Emperor's Court, and there in the centre of great world-movements, in a Court which numbered the most accomplished scholars of the time, Egbert began to 'see things.' When in 802 A.D. he was called to ascend the throne of Wessex, Charlemagne, it is said, gave him his own sword as a parting gift, but something far more potent—political insight and training—was his already.

Egbert set himself not only to consolidate his power in Wessex, but to weld the separate jangling factions into one under his personal supremacy. The details of this long struggle are part of English history and do not concern us here : suffice it that he asserted the supremacy of Wessex over the whole land, and it is in connection with him that the term England—Angleland—was first used. In 829 A.D. he held a council at Winchester and proclaimed himself King of Angleland.

Winchester thus entered on a new phase, as capital of England and not of Wessex merely, and its importance rapidly developed.

It was well for the land that internal union was thus in sight, for with Egbert's reign a new danger arose. The migratory racial movements of which the coming to Britain of Jute, Angle, and Saxon was but a phase, had never ceased, but the conditions had altered. In earlier unsettled days new-comers as they crossed the Swan's Bath had been usually welcomed as allies, now when the land had become settled, when wealth had accumulated in town and monastery, the late-comers came in guise of a foreign foe. Egbert's reign saw a great revival of the descents of these Danes or Northmen as they were called. Wherever their 'aescas' or longships appeared panic seized the countryside. Murder, outrage, conflagration, and ruin were the ordinary incidents of a Viking raid. Men might well pray as they did, "From the fury of the Northmen, good Lord, deliver us," for the invader knew nothing of mercy, and his enterprise and desperate valour were only equalled by his fiendish delight in cruelty. Egbert struggled long, and, on the whole, successfully, against these foes. In 839 he died, after a reign of thirty-seven years, and his bones are still preserved in a mortuary chest in the Cathedral of his capital.

The words on the chest are :

Hic rex Egbertus pausat
(Here rests King Egbert).

Surely Winchester, which preserves the bones of him who first strove for and successfully realized the conception of national unity, should be the Mecca for all true devotees of Great or Greater Britain.

Like master, like man, and great kings have always had great subjects. Such a one was Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, whose influence was all powerful during the next half century, and was reflected in Egbert's still greater grandson, Alfred. Swithun belongs essentially to Winchester; he laboured incessantly for the kingdom, the diocese, and the city, and his shrine became for centuries afterwards the glory of its Cathedral, and the place of pilgrimage for thousands of pious feet. He built churches; he protected the Cathedral and Monastery by building a wall round it; he built a bridge across the river, outside the East Gate of the city, where the present graceful Georgian structure stands. As some old verses tell us:

> Seynt Swithun his bishopricke to al goodnesse drough,
> The towne also of Winchester he amended enough,
> For he lette the strong bruge without the towne arere,
> And fond thereto lym and ston and the workmen that were there.

Fate deals unkindly with some, even at times with those who deserve most at her hands; Swithun is one of these. A man of saintly life and far-reaching influence, his humility and aversion to display were among his most striking personal characteristics. With an instinctive and indeed prophetic dread of superstitious veneration being paid to his remains after death, he gave orders that

his body should be buried, not within the Cathedral, where kings and saints reposed, but in the open graveyard outside, among the poor and the unnoticed. But in vain : with the monastic revival in King Edgar's reign, one hundred years later, came the erection of a new and more splendid cathedral. Tales of miraculous occurrence began to be told of Swithun's tomb, and nothing would serve but the translation and enshrinement within the new Cathedral of the saint, so pre-eminently national, whose bones had such potent virtue. Accordingly, in solemn state, in the presence of King Edgar, Archbishop Dunstan, and Bishop Æthelwold, the pious translation was performed. Thus Swithun, never formally canonized, became by universal consent dignified by the appellation Saint, and his mortal remains were for centuries the object of that superstitious worship which he himself had so earnestly dreaded. Later years obscured his reputation even more : a tradition grew up that the saint had signified his displeasure at the translation of his body by sending a violent deluge of rain, which for forty days rendered his exhumation impossible. No foundation for this impossible story can be found in any contemporary account, and several contemporary accounts both minute and circumstantial still exist ; but the tradition has passed into a proverb, and so the name of Swithun—his virtues, his piety, and his personality all forgotten—serves often merely to suggest the school-boy jingle :

> St. Swithun's day, if thou dost rain,
> For forty days it will remain ;

St. Swithun's day, if thou be'est fair,
For forty days 'twill rain nae mair.

For the general public he has ceased to be a historic personality at all, entitled to veneration and esteem, and has come to be regarded as a mythical being, malignant and capricious, the patron saint of discomfort and of stormy skies.

The century which followed Egbert's death was one of unremitting struggle against the Danes—a struggle during which the newly formed kingdom seemed more than once in imminent danger of being submerged. Æthelwulf and his sons faced the danger manfully, through which, at length, Alfred emerged victorious. The history of Winchester is in large measure merely the history of these movements.

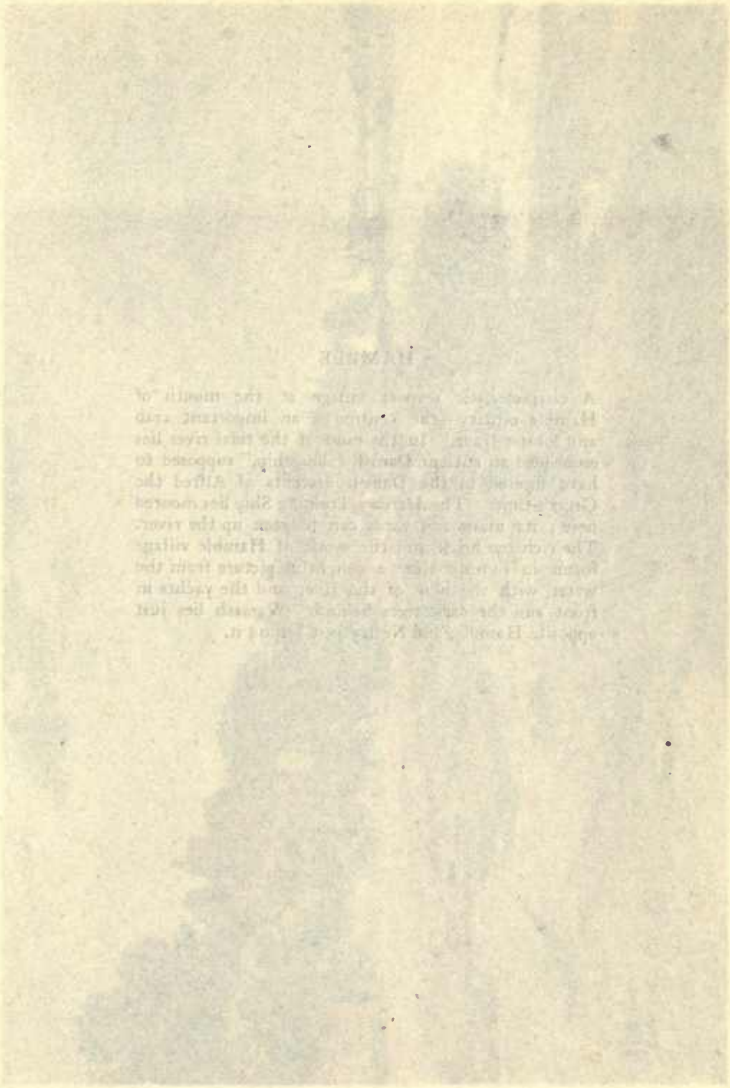
Æthelwulf, the priest-monarch, the son of Egbert, who succeeded him in 839, will be best remembered in Winchester as the father of Alfred, and by the charters, particularly two of extreme interest, which he executed here. The more important of these is still extant, and the original is preserved in the British Museum. This is often spoken of as the origin of tithes, but erroneously, as Æthelwulf's gift was a gift to the Church not of produce, but of one-tenth of his landed possessions.

The charter conferring this grant, having been duly executed, was solemnly laid on the high altar of the Cathedral in the presence of Swithun and the assembled Witan. The actual original of the second charter no longer exists, but an ancient copy is preserved among

the treasures of the Cathedral Library. Even as a copy it possesses extreme interest: it bears the names of King Adulfus (Æthelwulf), Swithun, and the King's four sons, Æthelbald, Æthelbert, Æthelred, and Alfred —the two elder sons being described as 'Dux' (Earldorman), and each of the two younger, mere boys at the time, as 'Filius Regis,' son of the King. Each name is attested, according to Saxon custom, not by a seal, but by a cross. The date is 854, when Alfred was five years old, and the document is the earliest tangible link still existing between the city and the great King.

Of Æthelwulf's other acts, his two marriages, his journey to Rome, and his grant to the Pope of Peter's Pence, as a ransom to relieve the sufferings of English pilgrims journeying thither, we cannot speak in detail. Suffice it that Alfred was taken to Rome by him when quite young, and was solemnly confirmed by the Pope himself. Æthelwulf died in 857, and was buried in the Cathedral. His bones rest in a mortuary chest mingled with those of Kynegils.

Each of his four sons succeeded him, one after other, and during their reigns the Danish incursions grew in frequency and intensity: 857 saw them repulsed with heavy slaughter in Southampton Water; in 860 they came again, forced their way to Winchester itself, burnt and sacked it. The Cathedral and Monastery appear to have escaped, thanks possibly to the strong, defending wall which Swithun had erected.



HAMBLE

A characteristic seaport village at the mouth of Hamble estuary—the centre of an important crab and lobster trade. In the mud of the tidal river lies embedded an ancient Danish "longship," supposed to have figured in the Danish descents of Alfred the Great's time. The *Mercury* Training Ship lies moored here; its masts and yards can be seen up the river. The rich red brick and tile work of Hamble village forms in summer-time a delightful picture from the water, with the blue of the river and the yachts in front and the dark trees behind. Warsash lies just opposite Hamble, and Netley just behind it.

Hamble

Æthelbert succeeded to Æthelbald, Æthelred to Æthelbert, and ever the struggle increased in intensity. In the last year of Æthelred's reign he and Alfred fought no less than nine pitched battles against the Danes. In the winter of 871 Æthelred died, as it would seem, mortally wounded in battle, and was buried at Wimborne, and Alfred, the last of the four brothers, became king.

CHAPTER VI

ALFRED

A prince that draws
By example more than others do by laws.
That is so just, to his great act and thought
To do, not what kings may, but what kings ought.
BEN JONSON, *The Hue and Cry.*

ALFRED the Great belongs in a peculiar sense to Winchester; here he was proclaimed king; here he lived, and ruled, and made his laws; here he gathered round him that assemblage of divines and learned men with whose co-operation he gave the first great impetus to a national literature; here he commenced the English Chronicle; here he devised his plans for constructing a navy to defend the land against foreign foes; here he founded a monastery, the Newan Mynstre, destined to play a great and honourable part for some 600 years after him; here his queen founded a sister institution, the abbey of St. Mary; here he died and was buried, leaving behind him the savour of a life strenuous, blameless, and devoted, having shown his world that the fullest development of manly

vigour was compatible both with the saintliness of the devotee and the culture of the book-lover and the student.

It was a rude age, the age of Alfred, but nevertheless it was a great age, for it was, in spite of all its crudeness and brutality, an age in which ideals were sought after, and indeed worshipped. It was Alfred's high distinction that he not only steered the ship of state successfully through seemingly overwhelming dangers, but that in his own life he exhibited to the world a realized ideal—an ideal that comparatively few monarchs have made any attempt to strive after, and which, it is safe to say, none ever achieved so completely. There have, indeed, been great empire builders like Charlemagne, great law-givers like our first Edward, saints with the spiritual elevation of St. Louis, scholars and patrons of learning like Henry VI., but none have combined these high qualities with such just balance and self-restraint as Alfred, who may be truly said to have embodied in his own life the earnest, long-continued prayer which his own words expressed:

> I have sought to live worthily while I lived, and after my death to leave to the men that should be after me my remembrance in good works.

Alfred was born at Wantage in 849, and there is little to connect his early life definitely with Winchester. His association in quite early days with the king's court, so frequently held in the city, with the aged

Swithun, who rarely left the city, not to mention the charter of Æthelwulf, above referred to, which bears his name, all render his early connection with Winchester more than probable. It was an active and stirring boyhood, including one, if not two, visits to Rome, and a solemn confirmation at the Pope's own hands—events which must have profoundly stirred him, young as he was. The bent of his mind was early displayed when his mother Osberga (or, it may be, his step-mother, Judith ; Asser says the latter) showed him and his brothers an illuminated volume—Anglo-Saxon poetry, very possibly the songs of Caedmon—and promised the book to the one who should first learn to repeat them. Alfred immediately sought his tutor's help, and won the prize, which appealed so much more keenly to him than to his elder brothers. For all that it was as a warrior, prompt in action, resolute in difficulty, that he first rose to distinction. At the critical moment, while his brother, King Æthelred, delayed, he hurled himself on the Danes, and overthrew them at the fierce battle of Ashdown, in the Vale of the White Horse. It was but an episode in the continuous struggle, and the end of the year saw the death of Æthelred, and Alfred was called upon by the Witan, against his will indeed, at the age of twenty-two to mount the throne.

It was a thankless and, as it would seem, hopeless task that the youthful king had before him. The last thirty years had changed the face of the land ; bit by bit the Danes had made good their footing ; province

after province had fallen into their possession. Edmund, the saintly king of East Anglia, had died a martyr's death at their hands; Alfred's three brothers had mounted the throne one by one, but, bravely as they had struggled, they had merely been able to retard, not to prevent the resistless advance. As he looked round on the blackened ruins of the capital in which he had just been crowned, his heart might well have sunk within him. Nor was it merely the fate of England which then hung in the balance; that of northern Christendom equally depended on the issue of the conflict. It is not generally recognized that during the early years of Alfred's reign the heroic determination of the youthful king, and the loyal devotion of the sorely dismembered little kingdom of Wessex—for all else in England was lost—were all that stood between northern Europe and an ever-advancing tide of pitiless and savage heathenism, which, had it not been stemmed, would have engulfed the whole northern continent, with little hope of Christian enlightenment and development, it may have been for centuries. We may well be proud of the part that Winchester, as the capital of Wessex, played in the course of civilization during those dark days; and when, as indeed happened 150 years after, Winchester did see the Danish kingdom realized and herself the capital of it, it was a Christian and civilizing kingdom, and not one of violence and unbridled slaughter, over which she was called to preside. Well was it that Alfred was

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

It is to Alfred, to the men of Wessex, and in part to Winchester that the cause of civilization owes the deliverance from this impending danger.

For seven years the conflict went on, but it was a conflict almost of despair, though Alfred met all attacks with unfailing heart and resourcefulness. At length in 878 all seemed lost. Alfred was surprised at Chippenham during the Twelfth Night festivities, and forced to take refuge in the morasses of Somersetshire. The story is too well known to need retelling here; suffice it that in less than six months Alfred had reasserted himself, had conquered the Danes, had made peace, and had divided the realm with them. 878, with the refuge in Athelney and the peace of Wedmore, was the turning-point in the struggle and in the fate of the whole nation.

The second period of the reign, the period of more peaceful reconstruction and consolidation, for plenty of fighting still remained to be done, centres largely round Winchester, and it is more particularly round Wolvesey and the scanty remains of Hyde Abbey that the memory of Alfred still most closely lingers. Wolvesey was the royal seat. Here he formed his court; here he inaugurated his reforms; here he laboured, studied, deliberated. The defence of his

kingdom, the repair of the material ruin caused by foreign invasion, the construction of a fleet of ships, the promulgation of wise laws, the promotion of education, the encouragement of literature and travel, the actual founding of a national English literature and an English historical record, which no other nation can find a parallel to, the endowment of religious worship—all these in turn occupied his attention while he dwelt at Wolvesey. The command of the seas he early recognized to be the real defence of the land, and as soon as opportunity served he set himself to build a fleet. The Chronicle tells us that he

> commanded long ships (*aescas*) to be built against them (*the Danes, that is*) which were full nigh twice as long as the others. Some had sixty oars, some more; they were both swifter and steadier, and also higher than the others. They were shaped neither like the Frisian nor the Danish, but as it seemed to him they could be most useful.

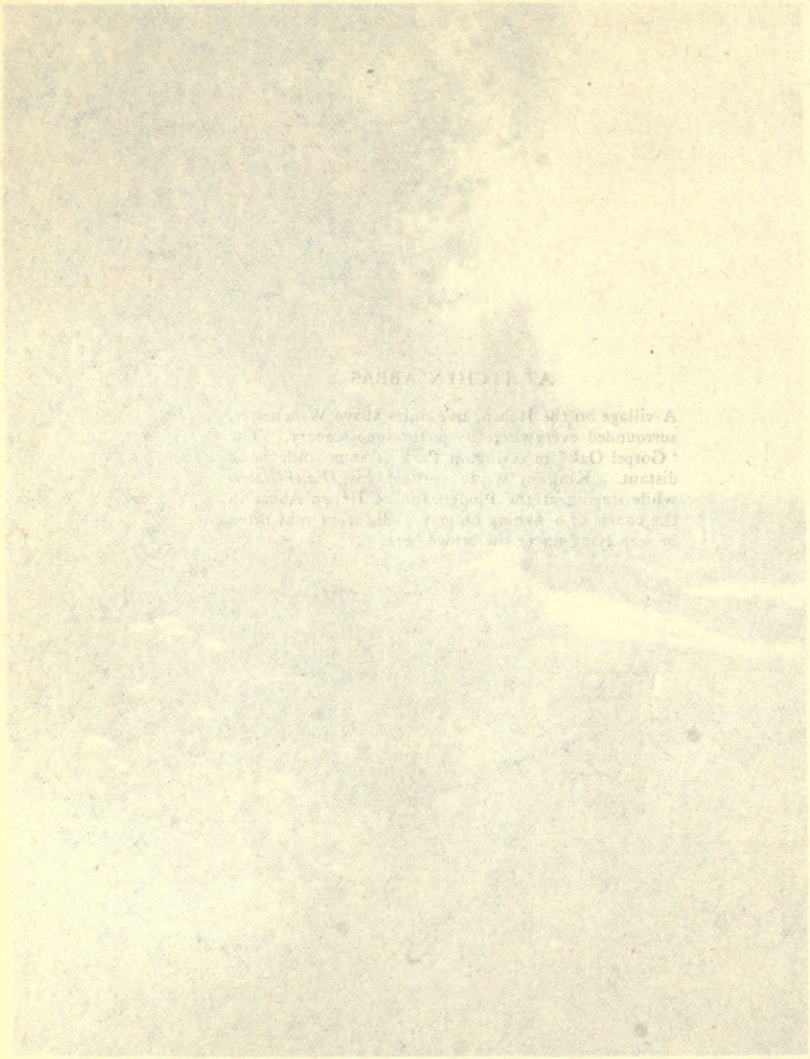
The Chronicle gives us also a stirring account of a sea-fight in one of the Hampshire harbours between Alfred's vessels and three Danish long ships. It is a graphic and well-told narrative, too long to be quoted here. The crews of two of the pirates were captured, and brought to the king at Winchester. The king, who was then at Wolvesey, commanded them to be hanged, very likely above those very walls of Wolvesey, grey and weather-beaten, which we see now, and which in their "herring-bone" masonry still show the hand of the Saxon builder who erected them. In the bed of

the Hamble River there lies still embedded the keel of a 'long ship.' One would dearly like to believe that it was one of those very pirate vessels which were driven aground, and whose crews were captured as related above, and the fact is not indeed impossible. Some planks and portions of this vessel may be seen in the Westgate Museum in Winchester, and various mementoes, such as the ceremonial casket presented to Lord Roberts with the freedom of the city on his return from South Africa, have in recent times been made from it.

Of Alfred's life of study and devotion we have a pleasant picture in Asser's *Biography*. Asser, afterwards Bishop of Sherborne, was a monk of St. David's whom Alfred persuaded to come to Winchester, and to enter his service as scribe and literary helpmate. Asser tells us that "it was his usual custom both by night and day, amid his numerous occupations of mind and body, either himself to read books or to listen while others read them." The roll of Alfred's literary productions is a long one—*Orosius*, the *Consolations* of Boethius, the *Pastoral Care* of Pope Gregory, and Bede's *History of the English Church* were all rendered into the vernacular. More important still was the English Chronicle, of which no less an authority than Professor Freeman says, "It is the book we should learn to reverence next after our Bible." It is a treasure-house of contemporary record, systematically kept and reliable, such as no other nation, save the Hebrews, has ever possessed. In all probability the

AT ITCHEN ABBAS

A village on the Itchen, five miles above Winchester, surrounded everywhere by picturesque scenery. The 'Gospel Oak' in Avington Park is some mile or so distant. Kingsley wrote part of his *Water-Babies* while staying at the Plough Inn at Itchen Abbas in the course of a fishing holiday. Big trout may often be seen lying under the bridge here.



original was compiled and kept at Wolvesey, and copies were made for use at various other places, as Canterbury, Hereford, Peterborough. Six ancient copies are extant, of which four are in the British Museum. One of the two others is an actual Winchester copy of extreme antiquity, and is preserved in the Parker Collection of MSS. at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Alfred's last years were devoted to founding religious houses—one at Shaftesbury, one at Athelney, and one, which concerns us most immediately, at Winchester, the 'Newan Mynstre,' and his queen, Alswitha, founded a nunnery at Winchester also—'Nunna Mynstre' or St. Mary's Abbey.

Alfred matured his plans for the Newan Mynstre in conjunction with Grimbald of Flanders, whom he invited over to England, and whom he induced to remain by making him the first abbot. But he only lived to acquire the site, for which, it is said, he paid the enormous rate of a mark of gold per foot. The spot selected was north-west of the present cathedral churchyard, in the angle near St. Laurence's Church, and the minster was completed by Edward the Elder, King Alfred's son, who succeeded him. The further history of the Newan Mynstre, its removal and rebuilding as Hyde Abbey, its dissolution and its decay, will be related in due course.

Alfred died in 901, and his remains have been thrice interred—first of all in the 'Ealden Mynstre,' the old minster, as the cathedral began then to be called; then

at the completion of the Newan Mynstre they were translated thither with solemn pomp and reverence; and again at the reconstruction and removal of the fabric with equal pomp and circumstance to Hyde Abbey. The abbey is now merely a ruined fragment, and every trace of the abbey church has disappeared. The citizens of Winchester, so careful in the main of their treasures of antiquity, have permitted Alfred's resting-place to be lost sight of and forgotten altogether, and modern search has not as yet identified the spot. In 1901, the year of the millenary of his death, an attempt was made to atone in some measure for this irreparable neglect, and the boldly conceived statue of Alfred, erected in Winchester Broadway, in front of the spot which his own queen's abbey had actually occupied, is a reminder, not unworthy so far as outward monument and statuary art can serve, of the hallowed association of Winchester with this, the greatest of all our English monarchs. True is it that little tangible now remains, whether of Wolvesey, Newan Mynstre, or Hyde which we can directly connect with him—but his story, and his work, the inspiration of his life, and his example are things more real and more tangible in their way even than brick or stone or carven figure, and Alfred's memory can never here be lost, even though his tomb remains lost sight of and slighted, and 'no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.'

CHAPTER VII

ALFRED'S DEATH AND SIXTY YEARS AFTER

Erunt reges nutritii tui, et reginae nutrices tuae.

When Alfred died in 901 he had accomplished a great work; a work great and lasting, as the next sixty years were to show, and during these years the ascendancy of Wessex and of the line of Egbert was to grow more and more undisputed, till it culminated in the reign of Edgar the Magnificent. These days were days of rapid development in Winchester, and the fortunes of the city at this period were closely linked with Alswitha, Alfred's widow, Grimbald, the monk, and the two strong kings of Alfred's line, Edward, his son, and Athelstan, his grandson.

As already related, Alfred had planned the important foundation of the Newan Mynstre, and had settled the site before his death. Its completion was the work of the early days of Edward the Elder, who, almost immediately on ascending the throne, convened a great meeting of the Witan at Winchester to discuss the matter at the outset. The king's own views were limited

and parsimonious, and he was anxious to lay the lands of the Ealden Mynstre under contribution as a means of defraying the cost, but the venerable Grimbald, now over eighty years of age, was inflexible. "God will not," said he, "accept robbery for burnt-offering," and he carried his point. The king made a liberal endowment for the purpose, and the walls of the minster rose apace. At the same time the abbey of St. Mary, founded by Alswitha, was proceeded with, and the monastic quarter of the city saw a trinity of fair monasteries, grouped side by side, rise rapidly into prominence. Accident served to invest the new abbey with peculiar interest and sanctity. A Danish descent on Picardy had driven a crowd of refugees to seek shelter across the sea, and they had crossed over to Hampshire, bearing with them their greatest treasure—the hallowed bones of their patron saint, St. Judocus or St. Josse. The king received them hospitably at Winchester, and the sacred relics were solemnly and splendidly enshrined within the partially completed church of the New Minster. Then in 903, in the presence of a great concourse of nobles and clergy, the dedication of the New Minster was solemnly performed by Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury. Scarcely was this completed ere another equally striking act was performed, viz. the translation within the walls of the new church of the remains of the founder, the great Alfred himself—a solemn and imposing rite, carried out with all the pomp and dignity of impressive circumstance :

cum apparatibus regali magnificentia dignis
(with solemn pomp befitting his royal state),

as the *Liber de Hyda* informs us.

Then in rapid succession Grimbald, Alfred's first nominated abbot, and Alswitha, his devoted queen and widow, were called to rest, and the queen's remains were piously interred side by side with those of her husband. Thus within three years of Alfred's death the Newan Mynstre had risen not merely into being, but had already become invested with ascendancy and popular prestige as the hallowed repository of the mortal remains of a wonder-working saint, a venerated abbot, of a saintly king, and of his royal consort. Some twenty years later, within the same abbey church—thus already established as a venerated mausoleum—Edward the Elder himself was also laid, after a strenuous reign, in which he had consolidated the Anglo-Saxon power and had re-established firmly the unity of the kingdom. Thus, as year succeeded year, Winchester grew in extent and importance. The prestige and dignity of its ecclesiastical foundations established it thus early as the leading centre of pious pilgrimage in the south of England, and shopmen and merchants followed eagerly the pilgrim stream. Accordingly Edward the Elder drew up what may be called the first commercial code of the city—laws regulating the selling of goods and the making of bargains in open market in the city. In the same reign associations or confraternities of traders for mutual support began to be formed—confraternities

which, under the name of 'gilds' or guilds, were destined to become in time corporate municipal bodies, with the 'Hall of the Gild Merchant' as the centre of civic rule and influence. A formal mayor and corporation were to come later, but the elements and something more of civic rule in Winchester can be thus traced continuously back and recognized for full a thousand years.

Of Athelstan the warrior we have but little actual Winchester history to record; he reigned from 925 to 940, and was buried not at Winchester but at Malmesbury. To atone for this historical paucity we have one glorious romantic legend—the legend of the fight between Guy of Warwick and Colbrand, the Danish giant and warrior, a story which has long been a classic fairy tale. Rudborne, in his *Major Historia Wintoniae*, copying from the *Liber de Hyda*, solemnly records how Athelstan, invested in his capital city by Anelafe, King of the Danes, agreed with his besieger to decide the issue by a combat between champions, and he tells us how a new Polyphemus,

monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens,

Colbrand, "a giant wondrous of stature, hideous of aspect, and of unparalleled ferocity," came forward to champion the Danish cause, and how the English protagonist, Guy of Warwick, his opposite in every attribute, "prudent, self-restrained, resolute, manly in mind and skilled to combat,"

Against great odds bare up the war

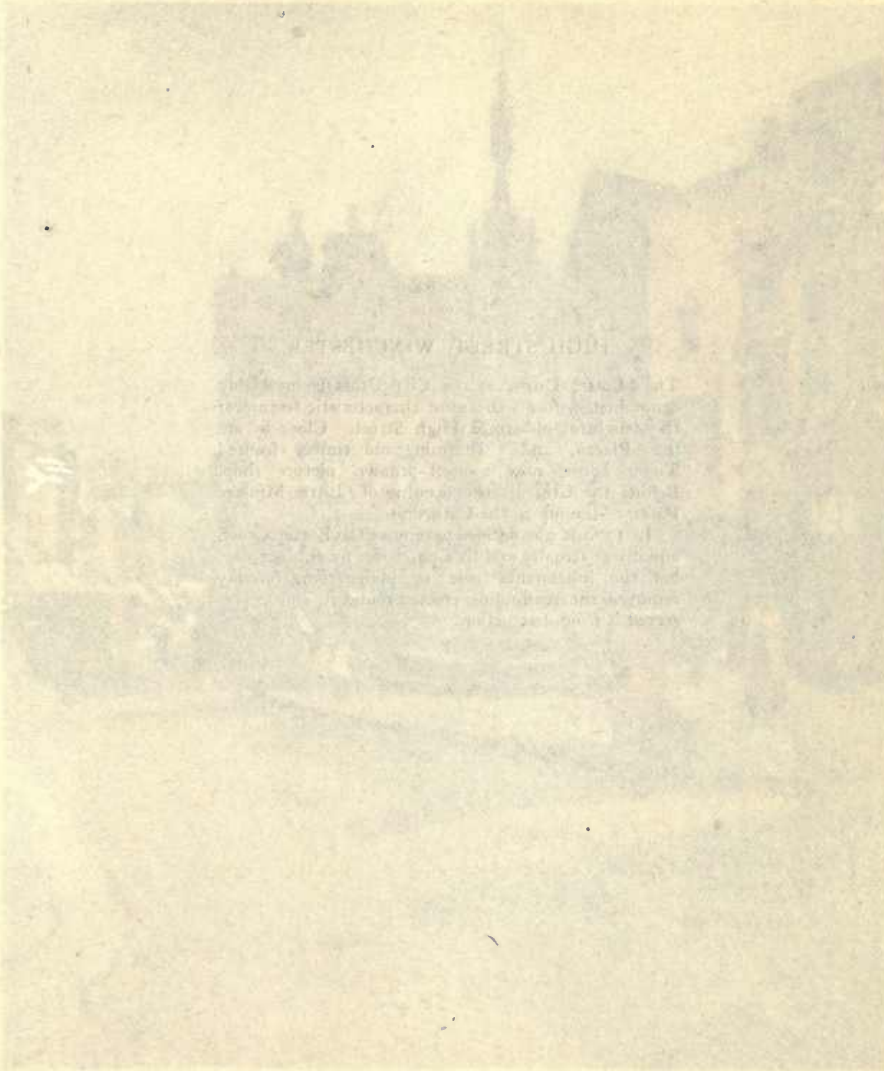
"in a certain meadow lying northward of the city, now called De Hyde mead, then called Denemarck," while Athelstan watched the combat anxiously from a corner of the city walls. Swords flashed, splinters flew, long was the conflict doubtful ; each antagonist in turn prevailed, while hearts beat fast and lips grew white with tense compression, till right prevailed, and the head of the second Goliath was severed from its trunk by our Saxon David.

The worthy Knighton, in his *De Eventibus Angliae*, amplifies the story, and the details fairly scintillate at his imaginative smithy. The fight occurs in Chiltecumbe or Chilcomb valley ; Guy of Warwick takes the field, mounted on Athelstan's own steed and girt with arms of wondrous potency — the sword of Constantine the Great, the spear of Saint Maurice himself.

Colbrand, also mounted, bears with him a whole armoury — axe, and club, and iron hook — while a waggon by his side bears a whole assortment of miscellaneous ironmongery for him to use at need against his adversary. It is strength, and stature, and brute force against courage and address, and for a long time Guy appears to be at the mercy of his adversary. The latter, however, in dealing a ponderous blow—the *coup de grâce* as he imagines—contrives to let his weapon slip, and as he reaches to recover it, the English champion rushes in and severs his hand from off his arm. Nevertheless, the issue is for long in doubt, and it is not till darkness has all but fallen that the giant's strength ebbs from weakness and loss of blood, and

his nimble adversary shears off his head with one sweep of his sword. Readers of Kingsley's *Hereward the Wake* will recall in the above act something more than a reminiscence of the strong conflict between Hereward and Ironhook, the Cornish giant. The story is indeed a Cornish legend, localised round Athelstan and the Wessex capital. Gerald of Cornwall, a writer whose writings exist now only in fragments, related it in his *De Gestis Regum Westsaxonum*, and it is his account, incorporated in the *Liber de Hyda*, which is the source of its introduction into our local history. Yet strange as it may seem, this wildly impossible romance was accepted for centuries as historical; Danemark mead still exists as a local name, and an inn known as the Champions only disappeared from the reputed locale of this wonderful conflict a few years ago.

And so through legend and historical record alike, our city's history moved forward step by step. King after king of Egbert's line succeeded to the throne and ruled in Winchester. Edred the Pious succeeded Edmund the Magnificent and was buried in the Old Minster. Edwy the Inglorious succeeded Edred, and died and was buried in the New Minster, and thus in 959 the realm passed under the rule of Edgar, his half-brother, Edgar the Peaceable, whom the monks named also Edgar the Magnificent. With his reign a fresh chapter of interest and importance opens in our city's history.



HIGH STREET, WINCHESTER

The 'Butter Cross,' as the City Cross is invariably denominated, forms the most characteristic feature of the delightful old-world High Street. Close by are the 'Piazza,' and a charming old timber-fronted Tudor house, now a well-known picture shop. Behind the Cross is the opening of 'Little Minster Passage' leading to the Cathedral.

In 1770 it was decided to remove the Butter Cross, and it was actually sold to a purchaser for this purpose, but the inhabitants rose in indignation, forcibly removed the scaffolding erected round it, and so preserved it from destruction.

ALLENS
High street
Winchester

CHAPTER VIII

ÆTHELWOLD, SAINT AND BISHOP

O see ye not yon narrow road
So thick beset with thorns and briars ?
That is the land of righteousness,
Tho' after it but few enquires.
THOMAS THE RHYMER.

WITH the death of Edwy in 959 a new chapter of interest opens, a period of revival, of growth, of development, the golden age of Saxon Winchester, during which the Saxon city was at its zenith of importance, the reign of Edgar the Peaceable and Magnificent.

The monkish chroniclers have for the most part painted Edgar in glossy colours ; they sang his virtues, his magnificence, his piety, his love for Holy Church. They spoke of him as a second Solomon, and the comparison was in its way not inapt, for, like Solomon, he enjoyed peace and loved display ; like Solomon, he allowed his private life to drag him to a low level ; and, like Solomon, he left a son behind him, who was to see his kingdom rent asunder and a better than he

bearing sway in it. But it is neither Edgar, who, with all his faults, ruled wisely, nor his son, Æthelred, of Evil Counsel, who, with all his vices, did not, who are the leading figures of interest at this juncture ; neither is it the great Dunstan, of whom we get fleeting glances, Dunstan, the great archbishop, the master-mind of his time, in whose hands the would-be masterful and imperious king was indeed but as clay unto the potter, little though he realized it. It is Æthelwold the bishop, Æthelwold the saint and revivalist, Æthelwold the builder and lover of learning, who is the dominating figure, and it is rather by the commencement and completion of his work than by the accessions or deaths of kings that the limits of the period are to be assigned.

For estimating the course of Winchester history at this important and interesting stage we have fortunately more than an abundance—a wealth of historical materials. Not only do the *English Chronicle* and all the leading monkish chroniclers contain full references, but numerous other local sources of history, *e.g.* Rudborne, the various Winchester annalists, and the *Liber de Hyda*, exist, which deal fully with it. Besides these we have a minutely circumstantial life of Æthelwold himself, and, perhaps most interesting of all, a remarkable account by the same author, Wulfstan, precentor of Winchester, describing, in curiously involved and almost interminable Latin elegiacs, the wonders of the new Winchester cathedral which Æthelwold built, and the splendour of various great and striking ceremonies which he saw performed within it.

Æthelwold, Saint and Bishop

Æthelwold did more than merely leave his mark on Winchester; he transformed it. He found its ecclesiastical life poor, self-centred, and stagnant; he left it active, influential, creative; he found the Old Minster, with its cathedral church, bare, distanced, and neglected, eclipsed and outshone by Alfred's later foundation, the Newan Mynstre. He left it not merely with an acknowledged ascendancy, but a new fabric, the finest in the land, the pride of the city, and almost one of the wonders of the age, a centre of pilgrimage of great resort and renown, with a new shrine containing a new patron saint, the wonder-working shrine of St. Swithun. He found the domestic buildings small, damp, unhealthy; he rebuilt them and brought to them a supply of pure water, irrigating the city and its river valley by streams whose courses still remain, to all intents and purposes, unchanged. *Nullum tetigit quod non ornavit* might well have been the epitaph over his tomb.

Ecclesiastical life in England had, in fact, never really recovered from the Danish *débâcle* of the later ninth century: monasteries had been burnt, plundered, impoverished: recovery had been but slow and partial: slackness and sloth were almost universal. It is not known how far in the earlier English monasteries the Benedictine rule and the common cœnobitic life had ever been strictly followed, but when Dunstan rose to influence there were practically no religious houses where monks were to be found; in their place non-resident canons, or seculars, as they were called, had

become the established order of things, and the various annalists have painted for us in vivid colours the laxity and debased standard of the ordinary church life of the day. The canons, or 'seculars,' released from the severe toil and discipline of the Benedictine rule, allowed themselves numerous indulgences, and were in many cases even married. Loving comfort and ease, they neglected the church, and the daily services were grudgingly carried out by deputy, by 'vicars' paid, and paid poorly at that, to conduct the services while the absentee canons expended the income of their 'prebends' elsewhere at their ease. Thus Wulfstan tells us—

> There were then in the Old Minster, wherein is the bishop's stool, canons of disreputable manners and morals, so swollen with pride and insolence that numbers of them would not condescend to celebrate the masses when their regular turn came, who turned adrift the wives they had unlawfully married, and took others in their stead, and who gave themselves up to gluttony and drunkenness.

It is always interesting to note the snowball principle of accretion in the various annalists' accounts, and the fifteenth-century Winchester annalist improves upon this picture, depicting them as

> . . . canons, canonical only in name, who neglected their duties in the church, and left the pious labours of vigils and the service of the altar to be performed vicariously, absenting themselves from the sight of the church, or even, so to speak, from the sight of God. Bare was the church within and without. The vicars, scarcely able to keep body and soul together, could

not give: the prebendaries would not. Hardly could you find one who, except on compulsion, would offer a shabby altar cloth or present a chalice worth a few shillings.

Be this as it may—and the monkish chroniclers would not be likely to spare the seculars—the standard of life was terribly lax, and Dunstan, originally abbot of Glastonbury, then Bishop of Worcester, and finally archbishop, set out, with King Edgar's sanction, on the path of reform, and Æthelwold assisted heart and soul in the movement.

In their respective abbeys, Glastonbury and Abingdon, and in these only, monks had been re-established. Now the movement for the replacing of seculars by monks became general, and when in 963 he was consecrated Bishop of Winchester by Dunstan, Æthelwold set himself to revive the monastic orders in the three Winchester houses and elsewhere in the land.

The canons of the Old Minster, however, flatly refused to adopt the monastic life and discipline, and finally Æthelwold brought monks from Abingdon to replace them. Wulfstan relates their coming thus :—

It happened on a Sabbath in the beginning of Lent, as the monks from Abingdon were standing at the entrance to the church, that the canons were finishing mass, chanting together, "Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice unto Him with reverence. Take up the discipline, lest ye perish from the right way," as if they should say, "We will not serve the Lord, nor keep His discipline; do you do it in your turn, lest, like us, ye perish from the way which opens the heavenly realms to those who

follow righteousness." Accepting this as an omen, one of them exclaimed, "Why do we stand still outside the church? Let us do as these canons exhort us; let us enter and follow the paths of righteousness."

The canons, however, struggled hard for reinstatement. They appealed to the king, who inclined to temporize with them, and a great meeting of the Witan was convened at Winchester, where Dunstan and Æthelwold urged strongly the monastic view. The king, however, was still undecided when a voice was heard from the crucifix built against the walls bidding him not to waver longer. Thus, so the *Liber de Hyda* informs us, the monks were confirmed in occupation.

Next year it was the turn of the canons of the New Minster to follow suit, for, in the words of Wulfstan, "thereupon the eagle of Christ, Bishop Æthelwold, spread out his golden wings, and, with King Edgar's approval, drove out the canons from the New Minster, and introduced therein monks who followed the cœnobitic rules of life." The Nunnery, St. Mary's Abbey, was at the same time placed under the strict Benedictine rule.

And now events moved fast, and with monks established in the monastery strange rumours and portents began to prevail. It was noised abroad that the saintly Swithun, buried humbly in the common graveyard on the north side of the church, had begun to manifest his virtues by acts of healing at his tomb. The churchyard became the resort of crowds of pilgrims, until

Æthelwold, Saint and Bishop

. . . the holy father Æthelwold, warned by a divine revelation, translated the holy Swythun, the special saint of this church at Wynchester, from his unworthy sepulchre, and piously placed his holy relics with due honour in a shrine of gold and silver given by the king, and worked with the utmost richness and craftsman's skill.

The same account tells us that the bones of St. Birinus were similarly deposited in another shrine, but St. Swithun was the popular saint, and the miracles wrought at his shrine soon made the Old Minster renowned throughout the whole land.

Indeed, as Rudborne, the monk, quaintly and naïvely tells us, "as long as canons held the Church at Winchester there were no miracles performed, but no sooner were they ejected and replaced by monks than miracles were wrought abundantly." Doubtless Rudborne was right. At all events crowds of pilgrims thronged to Winchester, and the name of Swithun, the Saxon saint, became a power in the land.

But all this time Æthelwold was at work rebuilding the Cathedral, and the church he reared was the finest in the land—one of the wonders of the age.

Wulfstan in his long-winded way describes the building, its aisles, its towers, its crypt, both mystifying the reader and losing himself over and over again in the description, as he relates how the newcomer passes bewildered from one wonder to another, till he knows neither how to advance nor to get back again.

Nesciat unde meat, quove pedem referat.

The gilded weather-cock on the top of one of the towers in particular fired his imagination. Glorious and superb, it grasped the ball of empire with its splendid talons, and from its lofty standard dominated the whole populace of the city :—

Imperii sceptrum pedibus tenet ille superbis,
Stat super et cunctum Wintoniae populum.

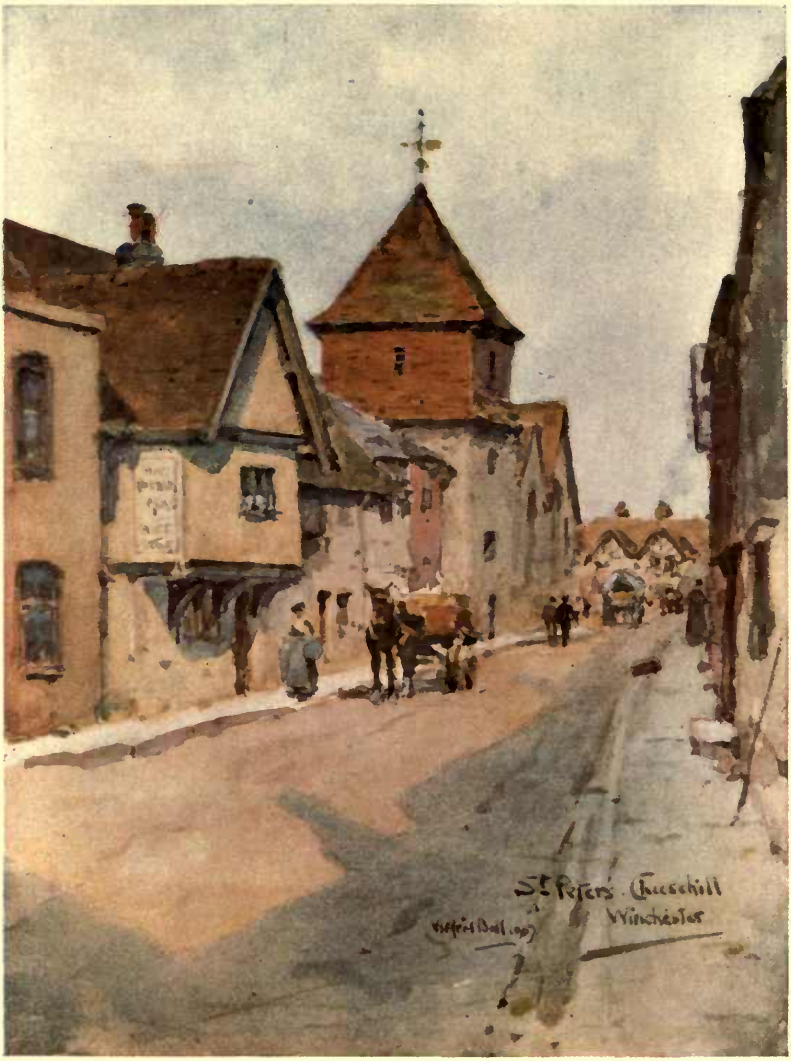
The mighty organ placed in the church by Æthelwold's successor he also enlarges upon. This mighty instrument had twenty-six bellows—twelve above, fourteen below—worked laboriously by seventy full-grown men, who sweated at their task, while two organists hammered vigorously upon the manuals, flooding the whole city with the volume of the sound.

Wulfstan not only gives us these details of the building, but he describes the various splendid ceremonies which he himself witnessed within it—the translation of St. Swithun's bones in the presence of King Edgar; the dedication in 980, when King Æthelred and nine bishops were present, including the "white-haired and angelic Dunstan" :—

Canitie nivens Dunstan et angelicus.

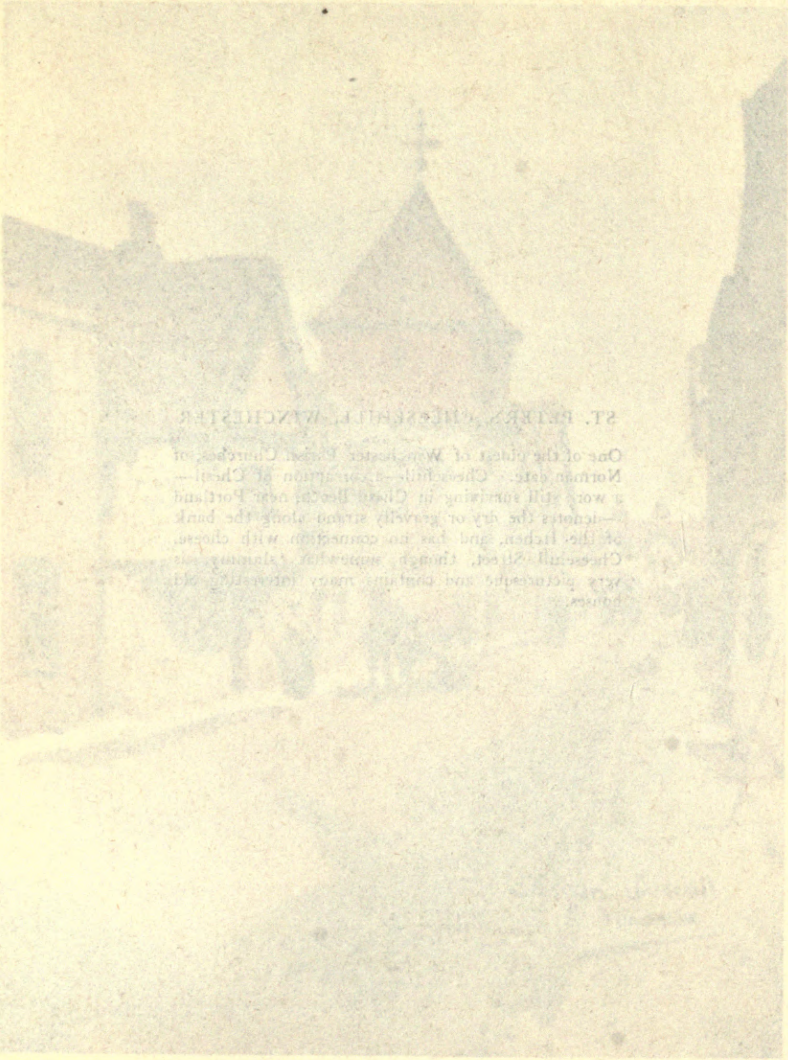
Then of the feast which followed, telling us how a tenth bishop—one Poca—who arrived too late for the labours of the ceremony, atoned for it amply by the depth of his potations.

Nulla laboris agens, pocula multa bibens.


St Peters Churchill
Winchester

ST. PETER'S, CHEESEHILL, WINCHESTER

One of the oldest of Winchester Parish Churches, of Norman date. Cheesehill—a corruption of Chesil—a word still surviving in Chesil Beach, near Portland—denotes the dry or gravelly strand along the bank of the Itchen, and has no connection with cheese. Cheesehill Street, though somewhat 'slummy,' is very picturesque and contains many interesting old houses.



Later on there was a second dedication. Altogether it was a period of splendid and impressive ceremonial.

Æthelwold's monks displayed their zeal in another channel. In both monasteries scriptoria were established, and Winchester became the centre of an unrivalled school of MS. illumination. The MS. treasures of Æthelwold's monks may still be seen in the British Museum, in Winchester Cathedral Library, at the Bodleian, and at Rouen. Loveliest of all is the priceless 'Benedictional of St. Æthelwold,' the glory of the Chatsworth collection, a MS. of rare beauty and interest, for it preserves for us the figure and features of St. Æthelwold himself as well as some of the architectural details of the new cathedral he had erected. How the 'Benedictional' came into the possession of the Cavendish family is unknown. Is it too much to hope that later on the day may come when such a treasure may be restored to its natural home—the Cathedral Library at Winchester?

Æthelwold's last work for Winchester we have already mentioned—the rebuilding of the monastery. He transformed the channels of Itchen, and brought its purifying waters through the city and the monastery by fresh courses.

Quoting again from Wulfstan :—

Hucque
Dulcia piscosae flumina traxit aquae
Successusque laci penetrant secreta domorum
Mundantes locum murmure coenobium,

Here great Æthelwold led sweet fishful courses of water,
And murmurs of mingling streams pervade the recesses monastic.

Such, then, was Æthelwold. In 984 he died, and was buried in the crypt of the cathedral he had erected. The place of his sepulture is now unknown. There are few among the makers of Winchester greater than he.

We have dealt with this era of constructive effort as if the full design was brought to completion in Æthelwold's lifetime. Such was not indeed the case, and it was left to Ælfeah, his successor in the episcopate, to actually finish the building schemes inaugurated by his predecessor. But it was Æthelwold, not Ælfeah, whose creation it really was, and Ælfeah (*St. Alphege*) will always be remembered more feelingly as the Archbishop of Canterbury, martyred by the Danes, rather than as the completer of Æthelwold's great master-work in Winchester.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAPITAL OF THE DANISH EMPIRE

Saxon and Norman and Dane are we.

ÆTHELWOLD'S work was still in full progress when King Edgar died in 975. Young as he was—he was only some thirty-two years old when he died—he had reigned for some sixteen years, and his reign had had notable results. It had been a reign of uninterrupted peace; indeed it was the only peaceful reign, save Edward the Confessor's, of any Saxon king in England, and a reign, moreover, of good government and wise laws. And though the memories of Edgar's domestic life, his intrigues, and his tragic murder of his false friend, Earl Æthelwold, belong rather to Wherwell and Andover than to Winchester, we have many personal touches reminding us of his close connection with Winchester history. We see him holding his court continually at Wolvesey. Tradition even derives the name of Wolvesey from the wolf's head tribute which he caused to be paid to him there, and which brought about the practical extermination of wolves in

the land ; but be that as it may, at Wolvesey Edgar royally kept his state, presiding over many a great meeting of the Witan, and promulgating his laws with the imperious formula, "I and the Archbishop"—an involuntary acknowledgment of what was, after all, the great power behind the throne, the influence of Dunstan. We see him attending the imposing ecclesiastic ceremonies of his reign, such as the enshrinement of the bones of Swithun, and we read of the wise laws and reforms he inaugurated. He standardized the coinage and the weights and measures of the realm. "Let one weight and one measure be used in all England, after the standard of London and of Winchester." "Let there be one standard of coinage throughout the king's realm"—regulations which serve to show the development of commerce and prosperity in the kingdom. Another was a curious law passed to check the excessive drinking habits to which in particular his Danish subjects were addicted. Pegs were placed at certain intervals in the drinking cups, and no one was suffered to "drink below his peg." Yet notable as King Edgar was as a king, his personal claim entitles him to little respect. Allowing fully for the lowly standard of his age, his life was sensual, loose, and so smirched with squalid self-indulgence that even his monkish admirers, who had every reason to laud him highly, were forced to mingle censure with the lavish encomiums they heaped upon him, and it was a bitter legacy which his loose domestic life left behind him for the nation to inherit. The national record, the

English Chronicle, accords him an appreciative but discriminating epitaph, praising his good rule and reciting his virtues indeed, but concluding in words which we can all at least re-echo :—

> May God grant him
> that his good deeds
> be more prevailing
> than his misdeeds
> for his soul's protection
> on the longsome journey.

And now followed years of tragedy and strife. Edgar's elder son, Edward, was very soon murdered by his stepmother, Ælfrida, and the throne passed into the hands of Edgar's second son, Æthelred the Redeless, or Æthelred of Evil Counsel, the feeblest, most inept, most hopeless of all our monarchs, whether Saxon or English. His reign was to witness the recrudescence of Viking inroad and savage assault, and when, after bleeding the resources of the realm to death in a vain and hopeless effort to buy off the invaders, his foolish brain conceived the wickedness of murdering all the Danes in England—a fatuous and desperate act of villainy, hatched at Winchester and consummated on St. Brice's Day 1002—the tragedy of misery was exchanged for the ruin of despair, and the terrible vengeance the Danes exacted was only ended by the conquest of the realm and the passing of it into Danish hands, and so Winchester became the capital of a greater empire than ever before or since—the capital of the great Scandinavian empire of Cnut.

Most striking of all the figures of this period, more interesting far than the ignoble king, was Æthelred's queen, Emma, daughter of Richard, Duke of Normandy, the beautiful, fascinating, and designing woman whom for her beauty the Saxons called Ælfgyfu Emma—Emma, the gift of the elves—whom Æthelred married at Winchester in 1002. A rare personality this Ælfgyfu Emma, but not a pleasing one. "I governed men by change, and so I swayed all moods," she might have said of herself. The wife of two successive kings, and the mother of two more, she was to be for fifty years, and during five successive reigns, the central influence in Winchester history; for Æthelred on the day he married her presented Winchester and Exeter to her as her 'morning gift,' or wedding present, and when he died, Cnut the Dane, Æthelred's successor, wedded her in turn. Of the details of her career we have yet to speak more fully, and after Cnut's death she 'sat' or kept her court at Winchester for many years as the 'Old Lady,' the beautiful Saxon phrase for Queen Dowager. Her memory lingers now most closely around the charming old Tudor building, Godbegot House, fronting Winchester High Street, which occupies the site and still re-echoes the name of a little manor which once belonged to her—the little manor of Godbiete. Queen Emma granted it to the prior and convent of St. Swithun, "Toll free and Tax free for ever," and toll free and tax free it remained for years and years, wherein none had right of access, and even the king's

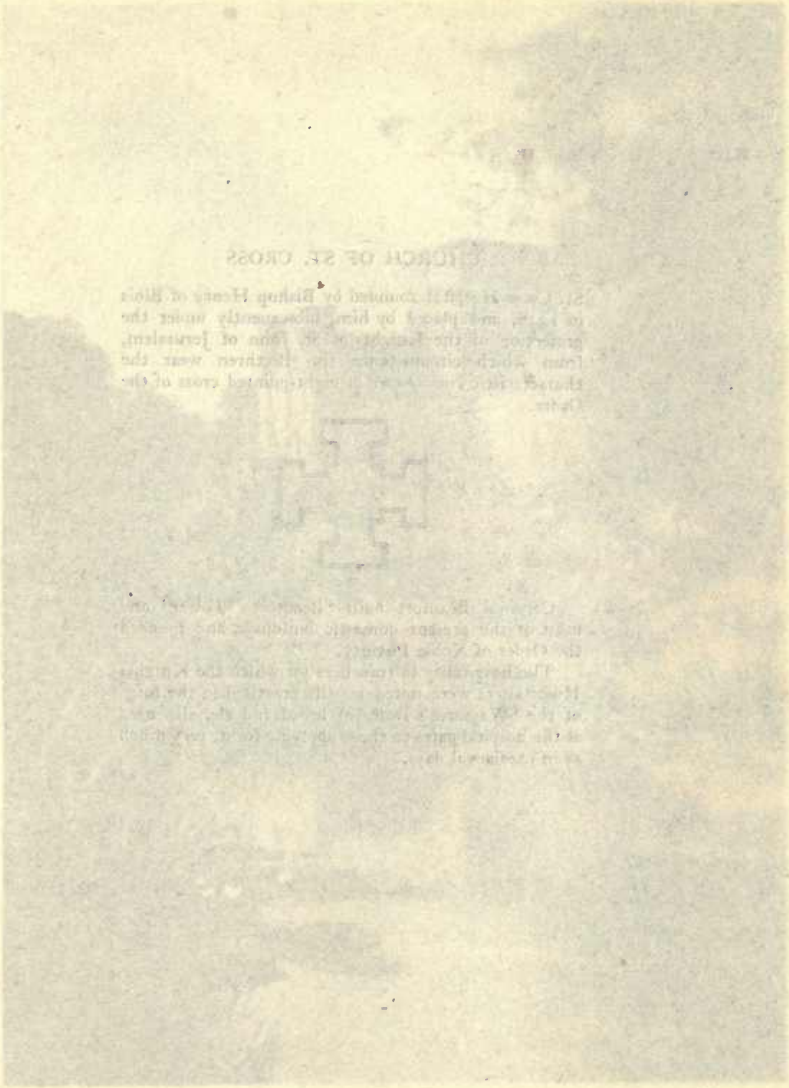
warrant lost its authority. And so for some hundreds of years the liberty of Godbiete remained a source of division and evil influence, a sanctuary or 'Alsatia' right in the heart of the city, where those obnoxious to the law might shelter and defy its terrors. For "no mynyster of ye Kinge nether of none other lords of franchese shall do any execucon wythyn the bounds of ye seid maner, but all only of ye mynystoris of ye seid Prior and convent"—a rarely suggestive illustration of mediaeval life and method. Destined ever to bring trouble with her in her lifetime, her very legacy seemed to bear with it the same evil fruit of civil disturbance to the city and much bickering of rival authorities for centuries after her death.

Of Winchester in Cnut's reign we have frequent mention in the chronicles of the time. The story of Cnut rebuking his courtiers on the seashore at Southampton we need not repeat, except as regards its sequel. "After which," to quote Rudborne's account, "Cnut never wore his crown, but placing it on the head of the image above the high altar of the cathedral (*at Winchester*), afforded a striking example of humility to the kings who should come after him."

Nor was humility the only virtue Cnut displayed. His munificence to the Church was striking and ample, and one chronicler after another records the gifts made by Cnut and Emma jointly to the religious houses both at Winchester and in the district round. "This same Cnut," we read, "embellished the Old Minster with such magnificence that the gold and silver and

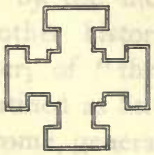
the splendour of the precious stones dazzled the eyes of the beholders." Two of Cnut's gifts were indeed to become memorable in after years. One was the great altar cross of solid gold which he and Queen Emma presented jointly to the New Minster, a presentation quaintly portrayed in the *Liber Vitae* of Hyde, a register and martyrology illuminated at Winchester during this reign. For years it remained the glory of the houses till it was destroyed at the burning of Hyde Abbey, and even then its history was not ended, for Bishop Henry of Blois, having stolen the precious metal mingled with the ashes from the conflagration, was forced by the monks of Hyde to make restitution. The other historic gift was that made to the Old Minster, of "three hides of land called Hille," usually identified as St. Catherine's Hill, whereon, in centuries to come, generation after generation of Wykeham's scholars were to make regular pilgrimage for purposes of play on 'remedies' or days of relaxation. The land is still Church property, and is held now by the ecclesiastical commissioners.

Cnut is a great figure both in Winchester and in English history. Foreigner though he was, he ruled not as an alien conqueror, but as an English monarch, and Englishmen are proud to claim him as one of the greatest among our national rulers. He died in 1035, and his body was brought to Winchester for interment in the Old Minster, and in the Cathedral his bones are still preserved in one of the mortuary chests already referred to, along with those of Emma his



CHURCH OF ST. CROSS

St. Cross Hospital founded by Bishop Henry of Blois in 1136, and placed by him subsequently under the protection of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, from which circumstance the Brethren wear the characteristic *croix pattée* or eight-pointed cross of the Order.



Cardinal Beaufort built 'Beaufort's Tower' and most of the present domestic buildings, and founded the Order of Noble Poverty.

The hospitality to travellers for which the Knights Hospitallers were noted is still practised in the form of the 'Wayfarer's Dole' of bread and ale, dispensed at the hospital gates to those applying for it, very much as in mediaeval days.

queen, and—strange companionship—William Rufus also.

With Cnut's death came faction and strife. Cnut's two sons, Harold and his half-brother Harthacnut, Ælfgyfu Emma and Earl Godwine, had all intrigued desperately for power. The various accounts differ, but Harthacnut, who, as son of Emma and Cnut, had a strong following in the country, was abroad at the time, and in his absence Harold secured the throne. Emma had played her cards well, perhaps too well, for she had managed to secure possession of Cnut's treasure and to assert her influence as 'lady paramount' over Wessex, for we read

> . . . it was resolved that Ælfgyfu, Harthacnut's mother, should dwell at Winchester with the king, her son's hûscarls, and hold all Wessex under his authority.

But this was not to last. Harold asserted himself and raided his 'mother,'—she was his stepmother, of course,—while

> . . . Ælfgyfu Emma, the lady, sat then there within, and Harold . . . sent thither, and caused to be taken from her all the best treasures which she could not hold which King Cnut had possessed; and yet she sat there therein the while she might.

Nor was this all. Harold's violence became impossible to make head against, and the poor queen was driven into exile

> . . . without any mercy against the stormy winter, and she came to Bruges beyond sea, and Count Baldwine there well received her . . . the while she had need.

And so, for some three years, both Emma and Harthacnut were fugitives at Baldwin's court, till on the death of the violent and worthless Harold, some three years after, they returned. Harthacnut, equally inglorious, reigned some two years only, and actually died during his own marriage feast as he stood up to wassail his bride. His body was brought to Winchester for interment in the Old Minster, as a modern inscription in the Cathedral serves to remind us ; while his mother enriched the New Minster with a gruesome relic—the head of the blessed Saint Valentine the Martyr—to pay for masses for his soul. Then in 1043 came Edward the Confessor, son of Emma and Æthelred the Redeless, who was "hallowed king at Winchester on the first Easter day" ; and the realm had peace at least, if not rest, for over twenty years.

Since her return to England, Emma, 'the lady,' had not been idle, for at the accession of the new king she was not only re-established in all her old supremacy, but had recovered much of the wealth which Harold had wrested from her, and the remaining seven years of her life witnessed a continual struggle for ascendancy between her and Edward her son. Edward had no sooner been crowned than he set himself to seize her treasure—doubtless it was national rather than personal property—but Emma, skilled to fish in troubled water, had landed both loaves as well as fishes in her net, and this time Godwine the earl, unfortunately for her, cast his weight into the opposing scale ; accordingly, six months after Edward's coronation, we read—

The King was so advised that he and Earl Leofric, and Earl Godwine, and Earl Siward, with their attendants, rode from Gloucester to Winchester unawares upon the Lady (*Emma*), and they bereaved her of all the treasures which she owned, which were not to be told . . . and after that they let her reside therein—

a passage notable in its way, for it brings before us, in close juxtaposition, practically all the great characters of the Confessor's reign—Ælfgyfu Emma, and the king her son, and the three great earls, with their attendants —Godwine, the great Earl of Wessex, accompanied possibly by his sons Harold and Tostig : Leofric, Earl of Mercia, the 'grim earl' of Tennyson's poem, husband of the famous Godiva : and Siward, Earl of Northumbria, the old Siward of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* —and suggests a striking subject for pictorial representation, which as yet, unfortunately, no artist's brush has attempted. It was doubtless in the national interest that the three rival earls were led to combine to support the king against his mother, but we cannot but regret that the circumstance which united this notable and noble trio together in the support of the king—probably the only occasion in his reign when the king ever commanded their united support—should not have been one more heroic than that of forcing a defenceless if grasping old woman to render up the keys of her treasure-chest.

We have one more picture of the 'Old Lady'—the legend of Queen Emma and the ploughshares, a legend peculiarly characteristic of mediaeval sentiment,

which is quaintly narrated in full and charming detail by more than one chronicler. Her enemies had slanderously connected her name with that of Alwine, Bishop of Winchester, and she had appealed to the ordeal by fire to clear her reputation.

Coming from Wherwell Abbey, where she had been forced to retire for refuge, she had passed the night in prayer and fasting, and in the morning, in the presence of the king and a great concourse of people, she had been led forward by two bishops, to pass barefooted over nine red-hot ploughshares laid in order in the nave of the Old Minster church. Yet such was the potency of the protection she derived from her blameless conduct and unsullied conscience, that she was not only unharmed but had actually passed over the ploughshares before she became conscious that she had even reached them, whereupon the king, overwhelmed with contrition and remorse, implored her forgiveness, in the words of the repentant prodigal: "Mother, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son"; while in token of his sincerity he presented his own body before the queen and the bishops for punishment. The bishops touched him each with a rod, after which the pious king received three strokes from the hand of his weeping mother.

The Winchester chronicler, conscious of a 'divided duty,' has managed very dexterously to extricate the king from severe censure, while honourably loyal to the lady paramount of his city. In 1052 Emma died,

and was buried by her second husband's side in the Old Minster. Her bones still rest, as already mentioned, mingled with his, in one of the Cathedral mortuary chests.

After Emma's death Edward the Confessor was frequently at Winchester; he revived the practice of the earlier Saxon kings, and "wore his crown at Winchester at Easter time"—in other words, held his Easter Court there. Into the details of his reign we need not enter. Most striking, perhaps, from the point of view of our Winchester annals, is the amazing accumulation of extravagant legend, beneath which the history of this reign is buried and obscured. One such legend we have just related; another one is that of the mysterious death of Earl Godwine. The *Chronicle* records the circumstance briefly and naturally. "On the second Easter day he was sitting with the king at refection (*doubtless at Wolvesey*), when he suddenly sank down by the footstool, deprived of speech and of all power. . . . He continued so, speechless and powerless, until the Thursday, and then resigned his life, and he lies within the Old Minster." A plain story, plainly told—an old man, a sudden stroke of paralysis, and death in its natural course. But not so in the hands of the fifteenth-century annalist; the story had grown, by the snowball principle, by then: Godwine was no friend of the monks, and Edward was a Saint—the Confessor. Godwine in this account, while feasting at the royal table, is under grievous suspicion of compassing the death of the king's brother, Alfred the

Ætheling. A cupbearer, in handing the cup to the king, slips with one foot on the floor, but dexterously recovers his balance with the other foot. "Thus," remarked Godwine, "brother brings aid to brother." The king retorts fiercely, "But for the wiles of Earl Godwine, my brother would have been able to bear aid to me." The earl earnestly protesting, and in token of his innocence, lifts a piece of bread, praying that it may choke him if he is in any way complicated in the crime of murder. The pious king solemnly blesses the bread, which proves a fatal mouthful, for "Satan entered into him when he had received the sop," and the earl falls speechless before the incensed king, who spurns the body with his foot, while his sons Harold and Tostig remove it, and later on bury it surreptitiously in the Cathedral. So was history written 'once upon a time.' Whereabouts in the Cathedral the great earl was buried is unknown.

One more legend—for legend, unfortunately, we must so deem it—the legend of Abbot Alwyn and the monks of Newan Mynstre, and we must conclude. Edward's reign is marked by the struggle between Saxon and Norman interest for supremacy in England, and to the Confessor Norman art, Norman culture, Norman thought were dear. Doubtless his instinct was so far right, but, unaccompanied as it was by any national sentiment or attachment, this predilection must be accounted in him a weakness, and not a virtue, and opposition to the king's policy took on a national and therefore patriotic colour. This was reflected in the

Winchester religious houses, and the Newan Mynstre, staunch in its attachment to the Saxon cause, became the rallying point for Saxon patriotism, while the Old Minster had leanings towards the Norman cause. Thus it came about that when, on the Confessor's death, Harold marched to Senlac to repel the Norman invader, Abbot Alwyn and twelve monks of Newan Mynstre donned coats of mail, shouldered each a battle-axe, and fought sternly and heroically in defence of the cause.

There, in the thickest of the fight, they plied their axes bravely, and when all was over their bodies were found, lying dead round the dead king's banner, and it was seen from their habit that they were monks of the New Minster at Winchester. The Norman Conqueror, on being informed of the discovery, remarked with grim irony that "the Abbot was worth a barony, and each of the monks a manor," and mulcted the New Minster accordingly. The story, which is to be found in Dugdale's *Monasticon*, is picturesque and appealing—unfortunately there is no confirmation of it. It is not given in the *Chronicle*, nor in any local sources such as the Hyde Abbey records (where assuredly it would have been preserved), in Rudborne, or the *Annales de Wintonia*. Rudborne gives, indeed, a long list of lands which the Conqueror deprived the New Minster of, but that in itself would be no confirmation of the story, for in the same passage he states that William also seized lands belonging to the Old Minster. William, it is true,

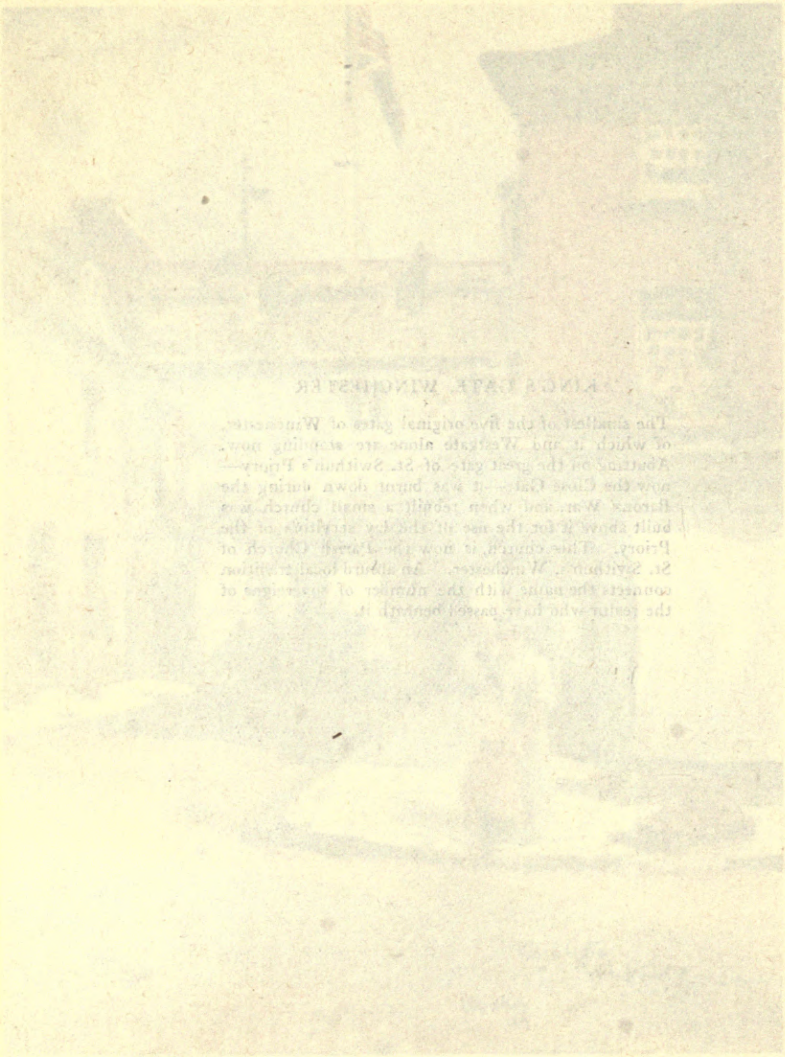
kept the Abbacy of the New Minster vacant for some two years, but that again was but an act of minor tyranny, too familiar to call for much remark. The story, indeed, appears to be quite discredited by the entries in *Domesday Book*, which seem to afford no evidence of spoliation, but rather to prove that the New Minster lands were added to by William, while the Old Minster certainly suffered at his hands ; and we fear that the story of the abbot and the twelve monks of New Minster must, like so many others, be offered up reluctantly as one more sacrifice on the altar of historical accuracy. The subject may be pursued in the *Victoria History of Hampshire*, where it is fully discussed.

With Harold's death on Senlac field Winchester opens on a new phase. Saxon history in Winchester is glorious and fascinating, but of Saxon buildings in Winchester few visible traces remain. Norman Winchester is with us still, and under the Normans Winchester was to expand and attain greater outward beauty and glory than perhaps a thousand years of undiluted Saxon rule would ever have conferred upon her.

Kings Gate
Winchester
Vanessa Bell

KING'S GATE, WINCHESTER

The smallest of the five original gates of Winchester, of which it and Westgate alone are standing now. Abutting on the great gate of St. Swithun's Priory—now the Close Gate—it was burnt down during the Barons' War, and when rebuilt a small church was built above it for the use of the lay servitors of the Priory. This church is now the Parish Church of St. Swithun's, Winchester. An absurd local tradition connects the name with the number of sovereigns of the realm who have passed beneath it.



CHAPTER X

NORMAN WINCHESTER

Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.

It is safe to say that no other event so thoroughly affected the fortunes of Winchester as the Norman Conquest. Not only was the city completely transformed in outward form, but its relationship to the country at large was to undergo profound modification, and a train of political circumstance opened up the effect of which was ultimately to deprive her of the leading national position she had hitherto occupied, and to relegate her to second if not lower rank in the national polity.

The decline of Winchester was, however, as yet still far distant, and the immediate result of Norman rule was to bring Winchester into even greater prominence than in the closing years of Saxon rule.

We have spoken of Winchester as the capital of Saxon England, and so it had been, but not in the exclusive sense in which the word is employed nowadays. In fact, in the modern sense, viz. that of a

permanent seat and headquarters of government, no capital existed then at all. The details of government were far less complex, government as an art far less specialized and far less an exact science, and its whole character took on a far more personal and direct complexion than at present, so that while Winchester and London might both correctly enough be termed capitals in the sense that the permanent symbols of rule, the official records, and so forth, were kept in them, it was in reality the king's headquarters, wherever he might happen to be, that formed the effective capital. But though Winchester was being, and had been for many years past, hard pressed by London, she still retained the Royal Treasury, and the state records were still kept there, and she could therefore still claim something more than a nominal pre-eminence, even though the growth and commercial development of London were rapidly diminishing her relative influence.

The position of London William had recognized by being crowned there, before the ceremony had been carried out at Winchester or elsewhere ; but other circumstances—political motives, reasons of personal convenience, and indeed of personal preference—drew him largely to Winchester. Indeed, when in England he 'wore his crown,' *i.e.* held his ceremonial court, three times a year — at London at Pentecost, at Gloucester at Christmas, and at Easter, the leading festival of the year, at Winchester.

And both policy and convenience were largely

involved in William's action. Communication was slow and difficult, the country sparsely habited, and government then, even more than nowadays, rested on prestige—the appeal to imagination.

William had posed as the lawful heir to the Saxon throne ; he appealed, whenever he could advantageously do so, for sanction for his acts to the laws of Cnut or Edward the Confessor, and he was far too prescient a ruler to underestimate the effect produced on his Saxon subjects, by his sitting on the throne of his predecessors and ruling his Saxon subjects in their historic centre of rule, quite apart from the subtle appeal his so doing made to his own personal vanity. Moreover, apart from all personal considerations, the position of Winchester marked it out as a natural capital—for England was after all but a part of his realm, and the English Channel was the bridge between it and the Norman provinces, with the estuaries of Southampton and of the Seine as the ends of the bridge. Indeed, as long as the link with Normandy remained firm, Winchester could hold its head up high. When Normandy fell away, Winchester declined also.

But beyond these reasons of state, Winchester appealed personally to the Conqueror's passion for the chase. The great forests all round it—for it was still but a clearing, as it were, in the great primeval forest—afforded him facilities for hunting at his convenience, such as few other spots could offer. Here then he erected a royal residence, some scanty

traces of which may still be seen ; here, very shortly after, the inevitable sign of Norman domination, a great, impregnable, and awe-inspiring fortress was to be seen rapidly rising on the high ground in the south-western angle of the city area, and here too—and, we are glad to say, almost equally inevitably—Norman culture and Norman devotion expended themselves in raising a stately and glorious temple for the worship of God, worthy alike in the dignity of its conception, the beauty of its execution, and the scale of grandeur on which it was carried out. Added to, modified, reconstructed or transformed, as various of its parts have subsequently been, it is in essential features the Norman Cathedral, which is standing still, and which is the glory of Southern England to-day.

Foremost among the questions of the time was that of ecclesiastical policy. William proceeded with caution. The position of Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, had long been canonically irregular, for he held Winchester as well as Canterbury, and he was guilty of other irregularities also, and so at first William assumed a non-committal attitude towards him. He refused to permit him to officiate at his coronation, but treated him with respect and courtesy, until a convenient opportunity arose to depose him, when he had him brought to trial and deprived. The remaining years of his life Stigand spent as a kind of state prisoner in Winchester.

Many tales are told of his hoarded wealth and his penurious habits ; a part of it, a great crucifix of massive

gold and silver, he bestowed upon the Cathedral. He was buried within its walls, and a figure of him has been of recent times placed in one of the niches on the great Altar Screen.

Stigand's deposition made room for two notable appointments. Lanfranc, perhaps the keenest intellect of the day, certainly the foremost among ecclesiastical statesmen, was made archbishop. William Walkelyn, a relative, there is some reason to believe, of the Conqueror, became the first Norman bishop of Winchester.

Walkelyn enjoyed a high reputation alike for learning and for personal piety. The monkish author of the *Annales de Wintonia* describes him as a man "of perfect piety and sanctity of life, endowed with wondrous sagacity and withal of such abstinence that he eschewed both meat and fish and rarely tasted wine or mead, and then only with extreme moderation."

To such a man, imbued with the culture as well as the genius of Norman civilization, the Saxon Cathedral of Æthelwold—albeit barely one hundred years before it had seemed so sublime to the restricted and untutored imagination of precentor Wulfstan—appeared meagre and quite insufficient. He set to work to rebuild the Cathedral, and this fact alone must serve to make his name ever memorable among the 'makers of Winchester.'

Walkelyn's building far exceeded in proportions the Saxon one it replaced. It is a moot point how far the sites of the two buildings were identical, and a passage

in the *Annales de Wintonia* seems to show they certainly were not entirely so, though in any case they could not have differed much; but in historic continuity, in the dust of the early kings it preserved, in the shrines of the saints which it displayed to the devout, it was still the historic cathedral of the Saxon capital, transformed and glorified indeed on a scale of noble vastness and dignity hitherto unattempted in England.

Foremost among cathedral traditions is the story of the building of the roof, recorded in the same *Annales de Wintonia* to which reference has been several times already made, and in them alone. Walkelyn had strained his resources to the full, and still needed timber for the roof. He applied accordingly to the Conqueror for a grant of timber, and received permission to take from one of his woods—Hempage Wood, near Avington, five miles from Winchester—as much timber as he could fell and cart away within three days. "Make hay while the king smiles," was the bishop's maxim. He collected a whole army of wood-cutters, carters, teams of horses, and in three days removed every timber tree in the wood, leaving one oak only, the so-called Gospel Oak under which tradition reported Augustine to have preached. Unwarranted as the tradition appears to have been, it served to protect the tree, which still stands, though to all appearance dead, an interesting reminder of Walkelyn and his cathedral. When William discovered what a sweep the bishop had made of his "most delectable wood," he was furious, and was only with difficulty appeased. "Certainly as I was too

liberal in my grant, so you were too exacting in the advantage you took of it," he said, when at length he readmitted the bishop to his presence and his favour.

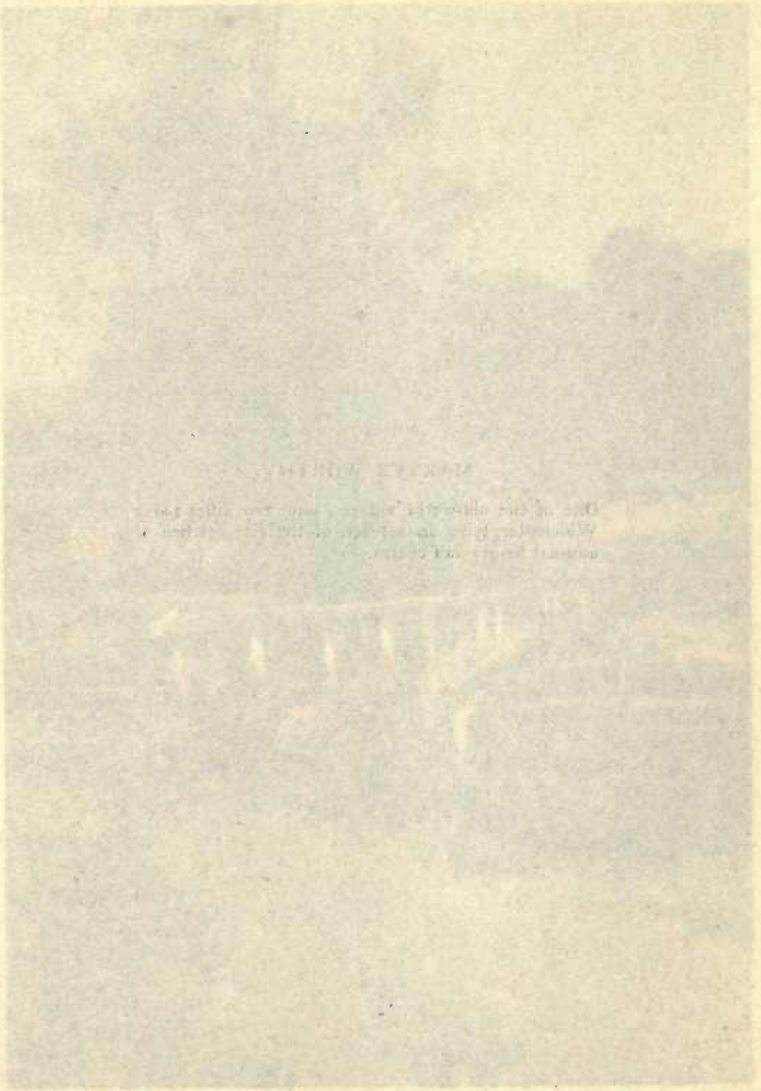
The story acquires additional interest from the subsequent history of these huge and venerable timbers. For some 800 years they have continued to support the mighty roof, though quite recently some of them have had to be replaced, owing to the destructiveness of a grub—the grub of the *Sirex gigas*—which had in places eaten them through and through. A portion of one of these beams with a specimen of the destructive *sirex* can be seen in the city museum, and curios made of this so-called 'cathedral oak'—though much of it by the way is chestnut—are being sold now for the benefit of the Cathedral Preservation Fund: thus is exemplified Earl Godwine's remark, "Brother brings aid to brother."

Two other items relative to Walkelyn are of interest. Curiously enough—and it speaks eloquently for his detachment of mind and freedom from professional narrowness—he wanted at first to revoke Æthelwold's policy and put back secular canons for monks. The monks were aghast, and, more important still, Lanfranc was hostile, and accordingly after a struggle the bishop gave way and abandoned the project. The other item is the connection between Walkelyn and the great Fair of St. Giles, to which reference has been already made. Walkelyn persuaded William's son, William Rufus, to grant him the right to a three days'

Fair, on the hill eastward of the city, and to apply the tolls so obtained to the erection of the Cathedral. To the development and further history of the Fair we shall return in a later chapter.

The residence or 'Palace' of the Conqueror stood in the very centre of the city, near where the Butter Cross stands now, and abutting upon the Newan Mynstre. Indeed, to obtain room for it the monks were despoiled of part of their site. Interesting remains of it exist in the thick walls and the cavernous cellars of the ancient houses which now occupy the spot—the latter vividly suggestive of dungeons and of the Isaac of York episode in Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Close at hand were the Royal Treasury and the Mint, and almost within hail were the quarters of the king's executioners, whom he kept always ready 'laid on,' as it were—a gruesome reminder of the darker tones in which life in Norman times was painted.

The rule of the Norman Conqueror was one which profoundly impressed the imagination both of his contemporary subjects and of succeeding generations. No historical events have been more picturesquely told or more repeatedly dwelt upon than the stories of Curfew Bell, of Domesday Book, of the Feudal System, and of the New Forest—all these centre in some form or other either round Winchester or the immediate locality. The history of William's reign, as presented in our history books to children at least, might indeed be almost entirely constructed out of Winchester and its memorials. The curfew ordinance,



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MARTYR WORTHY

One of the old-world villages, some few miles above Winchester, lying in a reach of the river Itchen of unusual beauty and charm.

Mortimer Worthy

the order to extinguish fires and put out lights —probably as much a wise precaution to diminish risk of fire in crowded towns built mainly of wood as directly political in purpose,—was first promulgated here. Here first of all curfew was rung, as it has rung nightly ever since. Formerly it rang from the little church of St. Peter in the Shambles, behind Godbiete; now it rings from the old Guild Hall—the Hall, in earlier days, of the Guild Merchant of Winchester.

Another event which affected the popular imagination even more profoundly was the great survey of the kingdom, the results of which were embodied in the Domesday Book, so called because, as Rudborne says, "it spareth no one, just like the great Day of Doom." The compilation of it was regarded as a great act of oppression. "Inquisition was even made as to how many animals sufficed for the tillage of one hide of land." In reality it was an act of statesmanlike administration, the object of which was to collect accurate information for the purpose of assessing 'geld,' or dues for military service. Exact assessment for taxes is evidently not a modern terror merely, nor is the modern income tax-payer the only one who has objected to inquisitorial modes of assessment.

Winchester and London were omitted from Domesday Book altogether—an omission which was repaired, as far as Winchester is concerned, in Henry I.'s reign, when the Winchester Domesday Book, as it was called, was compiled. Needless to say, Domes-

day Book was merely the popular name for it; its real name was the *Rotulus Wintoniensis*, or Book of Winchester, sometimes termed *Rotulus Regis* or King's Book. Domesday Book was kept at Winchester, and a copy of it at Westminster. The original is now in the Rolls Office.

It is certainly noteworthy that Winchester should have given birth to the two most valuable records of national history which this country has ever possessed, two records which no other nation can find any parallel to, viz. the English Chronicle and the Domesday Book. The value of the latter is that it gives us in absolutely unquestionable form the raw material of history, unwarped by personal bias, uncoloured by tradition. By means of it we can put to exact test many of the time-honoured statements, accepted for generation after generation without question or demur, and in that fierce crucible many and many a legendary tradition treasured hitherto as current historical coin, has been melted down and revealed as a spurious token merely. Such a one we probably have in the story already related of Abbot Alwyn and the monks of Newan Mynstre; the story of the afforestation of the New Forest is another. But the New Forest, though local, is rather beyond our scope: the reader is referred to the fuller volume on Hampshire for a discussion of this topic: and, indeed, the story of Norman Winchester is full enough as it is —replete with many a thrilling scene, many a notable historical figure. William himself, strong, stern, far-seeing and determined, a leader among men, towering

head and shoulders above his contemporaries, capable of cruelty, hard and grasping, indeed, as were all who strove to rule in those stern days, but never small or moved by petty spite. "He nothing common did or mean," might almost be said of him. And side by side with him, Lanfranc the Italian, smooth, supple, astute—like William, a master mind, a great man, but with the greatness of the ecclesiastical statesman rather than of the saint or even the scholar; and in sharp contrast Walkelyn the Norman, the high-minded, the conscientious, the ascetic—a scholar and a devotee rather than a statesman; and after these a host of minor personalities, striking and interesting enough, too, in their way. Foremost among these stands Waltheof, Earl of Huntingdon, son of the great Siward, Earl of Northumbria. A picturesque and pathetic figure he is, with certain virtues and high qualities all unfitted for his time.

Poor Waltheof—like Saul of old, his outward man striking and tall and goodly to look upon,—was the idol of William's Saxon subjects. But the fair exterior covered after all but a weak and irresolute soul, no match for the master mind of William, who read him through and through as a reader reads his book. Yet though in his weakness William despised him, in his popularity William feared him, and when denounced by his treacherous Norman wife for the merely colourable part he had played in the Bridal of Norwich—

That bride-ale
That was many men's bale—

William, deaf to all entreaty, kept him a close prisoner, and finally, at the Pentecostal Gemôt held at Winchester, had sentence of death pronounced upon him. Swiftly and secretly the order was carried out, and on May 31, St. Petronilla's day, at early dawn, while the men of Winchester were in their beds, Waltheof was led out to execution on St. Giles's Hill. He came arrayed in full dress as an earl, wearing his badges of rank, and on reaching the place of execution knelt down to pray. He continued sometime in prayer while the executioner, fearing interruption, grew restive and impatient. "Wait yet a little moment," pleaded the victim; "let me, at least, say the Lord's Prayer for me and for thee," and the Earl's voice was heard uttering the petitions one by one, till at the words, "Lead us not into temptation," the axe descended. But, as the severed head fell from the body, the lips were seen still to be moving, and the words, "But deliver us from evil," were distinctly heard. Such is the moving account we have of Waltheof's death. The last chapter of the story belongs rather to Crowland than to Winchester. Buried in the first instance obscurely at Winchester, his body was later on permitted to be reinterred at Crowland, and, on raising it, the head was found to be miraculously reunited to the trunk, a thin red line alone revealing the death he had died. Kingsley has told it in masterly style in *Hereward the Wake*, and the episode of his false wife Judith's visit to her husband's tomb forms a thrilling incident most picturesquely told.

Of Hereward himself Winchester history is silent, but Kingsley, in another striking passage, brings him too upon our local stage, when he rides to Winchester to make submission to the king. With his companions he rides along the Roman road which leads still from Silchester, till, from the top of the downs, they catch sight of the city lying beneath them.

> Within the city rose the ancient Minster Church, built by Ethelwold—ancient even then—where slept the ancient kings, Kennulf, Egbert, and Ethelwulf, the Saxons ; and by them the Danes, Canute the Great and Hardicanute his son, and Norman Emma, his wife, and Ethelred's before him ; and the great Earl Godwin, who seemed to Hereward to have died not twenty but two hundred years ago ; and it may be an old Saxon hall upon the little isle, whither Edgar had bidden bring the heads of all the wolves in Wessex, where afterwards the bishops built Wolvesey Palace. But nearer to them, on the downs which sloped up to the west, stood an uglier thing, which they saw with curses deep and loud—the keep of the new Norman castle by the west gate.

We will not stop to discuss this striking passage ; and though Hereward be but a figure imported into our local history, the castle which he saw was, both then and for many years to come, the most noticeable and striking feature in Winchester, as also the leading outward symbol of the Norman presence and power. For centuries it was to hold its place supreme, to see one sovereign after other add and re-add to its palace, to stand siege and battery, to be the residence of kings and queens, to witness the birth of more than one heir to

the throne, to gather within its walls councils and parliaments. For 600 years it was to endure till Cromwell laid siege to it, and then razed it to the ground, all save the great Hall, built in Plantagenet days, by Henry III. which still remains glorious in its associations as in the beauty of its proportions. Yes, Hereward and his companions might utter curses loud and deep, for the rebirth of the nation, which the Norman period heralded, was not accomplished without much labour and travail, both of body and of spirit; but could he have looked forward, as we can look back, upon all that Norman rule has been the stepping-stone to, both in Winchester and elsewhere, he would have found, like the unwilling prophet of old, a blessing on his lips and not a curse, and we too shall be ready to offer up our Te Deum in a spirit of thankfulness, earnest and sincere, though the appropriate accompaniment to it be rather a subdued strain, and in a minor key, than an unbroken outburst of triumphal joy.

CHAPTER XI

LATER NORMAN DAYS

They shot him dead on the Nine-stone Brig
Beside the Headless Cross,
And they left him lying in his blood
Upon the moor and moss.

BARTHRAM'S *Dirge.*

WHEN William the Conqueror died, the link with Normandy was temporarily severed, and during the reign of Rufus of evil memory Winchester declined in political importance; nor, apart from one or two episodes, are the Winchester memories of the reign of a striking character. It witnessed, indeed, the practical completion of Walkelyn's life-work—the great cathedral—as well as the institution of St. Giles's Fair, as already mentioned, but these belong in essence, though not in time, rather to the epoch of the Conqueror than to that of his violent-minded successor.

Most characteristic of all events of the reign was the long-drawn-out struggle between Rufus and Archbishop Anselm—"the fierce young bull and the old sheep," as Anselm himself had in dismal prog-

nostication dubbed them. On Lanfranc's death in 1089 William kept the see vacant for several years, as was his practice in matters of church preferment, in the meantime shamelessly appropriating the temporalities of the see ; and when as a result of a dangerous illness he at last agreed to appoint a successor, it was only with extreme reluctance and forebodings of ill that Anselm was at last prevailed on to accept the king's nomination. Anselm's fears were fully justified, and a state of hopeless strife soon existed between the two. To all Anselm's demands, particularly his demand to go to Rome for investiture, the king returned an inflexible refusal, until a crisis was reached at a great council held in Winchester, memorable as the last personal meeting between the king and the archbishop. Every form of pressure was brought to bear on Anselm ; he refused, as a matter of conscience, to give way, and finally announced his intention of going to Rome without the king's sanction, as he could not go with it.

The king raged and stormed in vain, till Anselm, as he turned to leave the royal presence, begged permission to give him his blessing. "I refuse not thy blessing," said the king, somewhat subdued ; he inclined his head, and Anselm signed the sign of the cross over him. They never met again.

The last scene of all in the reign is, however, Winchester's most dramatic, as well as tragic, recollection. On the afternoon of Lammas Day (August 1), 1100, news came to Winchester that the Red King, who had been hunting that day in the New Forest, had

WATERSPLASH AT ITCHEN STOKE

Perhaps the prettiest reach of the river Itchen—and that is saying a good deal—lying between Itchen Stoke and Ovington. The road between them crosses the main stream in a delightful 'watersplash.'

there met a violent death. Prince Henry, his younger brother, with his followers had spurred into the city bringing the tidings, had seized the Royal Treasure, and had summoned the Witan to pronounce him king. Meanwhile the Red King's body, alone and untended, lay weltering in blood on the spot where he had fallen, till a charcoal-burner, Purkess by name, travelling along had found it and placed it in his cart, that the poor remains might at least have decent sepulture in the cathedral of the diocese. As the news spread in the city an eager throng gathered and watched the road to await the sorry funeral cortège, as it made its mournful way, probably along the road from Compton through the south gate, and so into the old monastery. The interment took place the very next day, right under the tower—"on the Thursday he was slain, and on the morning after buried"; and when a few years later the Norman tower fell upon the tomb, men said it was the Red King's crimes and not structural weakness that had occasioned the fall. His bones were transferred later on to one of the mortuary chests on the side screens of the choir, but popular tradition still points to a tomb beneath the tower as the tomb where he was originally buried, and speaks of it as Rufus's Tomb.

And now, with Henry on the throne, Winchester resumed its former political importance. Henry reunited the Norman provinces to England, and the old activity of intercourse across the seas was resumed. But more than that, Henry identified himself with the

city more closely than any king has ever done before or since. His romantic marriage with the Saxon princess Eadgyth, of Romsey Abbey, grand-daughter of Edmund Ironside, made him popular, and after his marriage he and his queen—the good queen Molde the people called her—made Winchester Castle their residence, and here their son William, the ill-fated hero of the *White Ship* tragedy, was born.

With its old political position restored, and the king reigning and residing here in person, Winchester rose to the zenith of its importance in Norman days.

A number of events of interest are identified with this reign. First and foremost, the birth of Hyde Abbey. Newan Mynstre, the pious offspring of Alfred and Edward the Elder, had since the translation of Swithun's bones, during Æthelwold's régime, steadily declined in importance, and its activity had been much hampered. The proximity to the older and more extensive foundation, which eclipsed and overshadowed it in importance, was one cause; another was the cramped nature of the site upon which the New Minster had been erected.

Always small and confined, so close were their respective churches that chanting in one disturbed the devotions in the other. The erection of William the Conqueror's palace had made matters still worse, and the monks had had to forego a portion of their already over-congested area. Under these circumstances William Giffard, who had succeeded Walkelyn as Bishop of Winchester, obtained from Henry permis-

sion to move the monastery to the village of Hyde in the northern suburbs of the city, and here near Danemark Mead, where Guy of Warwick was said to have vanquished Colbrand the Dane, the new structure was commenced. The immediate result was highly satisfactory.

The monks of St. Swithun's, who also had suffered from the over-close proximity and congestion, as well as from the rivalry of its over-close neighbour, heartily co-operated and granted the site for the new abbey. Old rivalries were allayed, and for a time a spirit of cordiality prevailed, while as a means of raising funds to assist both houses the king's grant of a three days' fair was added to, and an extension given for five additional days, making eight altogether.

In 1110 all was ready, and the monks of Newan Mynstre proceeded in solemn procession to take possession of their new home, bearing with them their sacred relics—the great cross of gold given by Cnut and Emma, and the remains of their illustrious dead, Alfred and Alswitha and their son Edward, for reinterment in the glorious new Abbey Church. Newan Mynstre had so far lasted for some 200 years; now it entered on a new and amplified existence—an existence destined to endure for over 400 years, during which, as Hyde Abbey, it was to maintain a proud and exalted position among the monasteries of the land, till Henry VIII.'s commissioners dissolved and swept it away, leaving what is now a scanty ruin merely—a gateway and little else—to speak of the former

glories of the once famous foundation of Alfred the Great.

Of interest and importance only second to that of the erection of Hyde Abbey was the appointment of the bishop, Henry of Blois, who succeeded to the see on the death of William Giffard in 1129—a man of high birth and extreme eminence, who was to play a leading part both in the national fortunes and in the fortunes of the city for over forty years. His career we shall deal with more fully in the next chapter.

As to the condition of Winchester in Henry's reign we have fortunately sources of exact and unusually ample information. From the Domesday Survey of William the Conqueror, Winchester and London had been entirely omitted. Henry gave orders for a Winchester Domesday, as it is sometimes termed, to be compiled—a survey limited, it is true, to the king's lands, that is, the lands in Winchester paying land-tax and brug-tax (the latter a tax of uncertain nature, perhaps dues on brewing). This was supplemented by a second survey made some years after by order of Bishop Henry of Blois; and the results of the two surveys are of peculiar importance and interest, for though the church properties are left entirely unnoticed, we glean from it knowledge, not only of the streets and properties, but also of the occupations and handicrafts, *et hoc genus omne*, of Norman Winchester.

The mode of taking the census was peculiar. Eighty-six of the leading burghers were empanelled and

sworn to hold a grand inquest, and to return a faithful verdict. From their labours we gather not only that the Norman city, in its general ground plan, its walls, gates, and the dispositions of its streets, reproduced very closely many of the features of the original city erected by the Romans, but that that general character has remained practically undisturbed to the present day. The main artery and commercial thoroughfare was then, as now, the High Street, referred to only indirectly in the census as *Vicus Magnus*. Nearly all the other streets crossed it at right angles and were named after the different trades followed in them ; and we gather that in Winchester, as in all other mediaeval towns, each trade had its own special street or quarter, and their general disposition was somewhat according to the scheme annexed.

Some few of these names linger still, though practically all the special industries have long since disappeared. Minster Street has survived and for obvious reasons, Sildwortenestret and Bucchestrete have survived to modern times in Silver Hill and Busket Lane respectively, while Gere Street or Gar Street, curiously enough, survives, though all but unrecognisably, in Trafalgar Street. The list of the trades alone is lengthy and varied, and in itself a telling testimony to the prosperity of the city at the time. The occupations of cloth-weaving, tailoring, tanning, remind us of the great industry of the district—sheep-rearing—the wool and other products of which formed the staple attraction for continental merchants to throng to the city

Winchester

Westgate.

The Castle.

Gerestret (*or Gar Street, now Trafalgar Street*).

Goldestret (*or Gold Street, now Southgate Street*).

Calpestret (*or St. Thomas's Street*).

Menstrestret (*now Little Minster Street*).

The Monastic Quarter.

On this side also was Colobrochestret (*or Colebrook Street*). *Close by was the* [1] *Hantachenesle, the quarters of one of the* '*Gilds.*'

Snidelingestret (*or Tailors' Street*), *now Westgate Lane.*

Bredenestret (*now Staple Gardens*). *Here later on the Wool Staple was placed.*

Scowertenestret (*Shoe-ware-men's Street or Cobblers' Street*), *now Jewry Street. The Jewish Ghetto was here —hence its present name.*

Alwarenestret (*All-wares-men's Street or Drapers' Street*), *now disappeared*).

Flesmangerestret (*Fleshmongers' Street or Butchers' Shambles*), *now St. Peter's Street.*

Sildwortenestret (*or Shield-ware-men's Street*), *now Upper Brook Street. The name survives in Silver Hill.*

Wenegerestret (*or Wongar Street*), *now Middle Brooks.*

Tannerestrete (*or Tanners' Street*), *now Lower Brook Street.*

Bucchestrete (*near Eastgate*).

Eastgate.

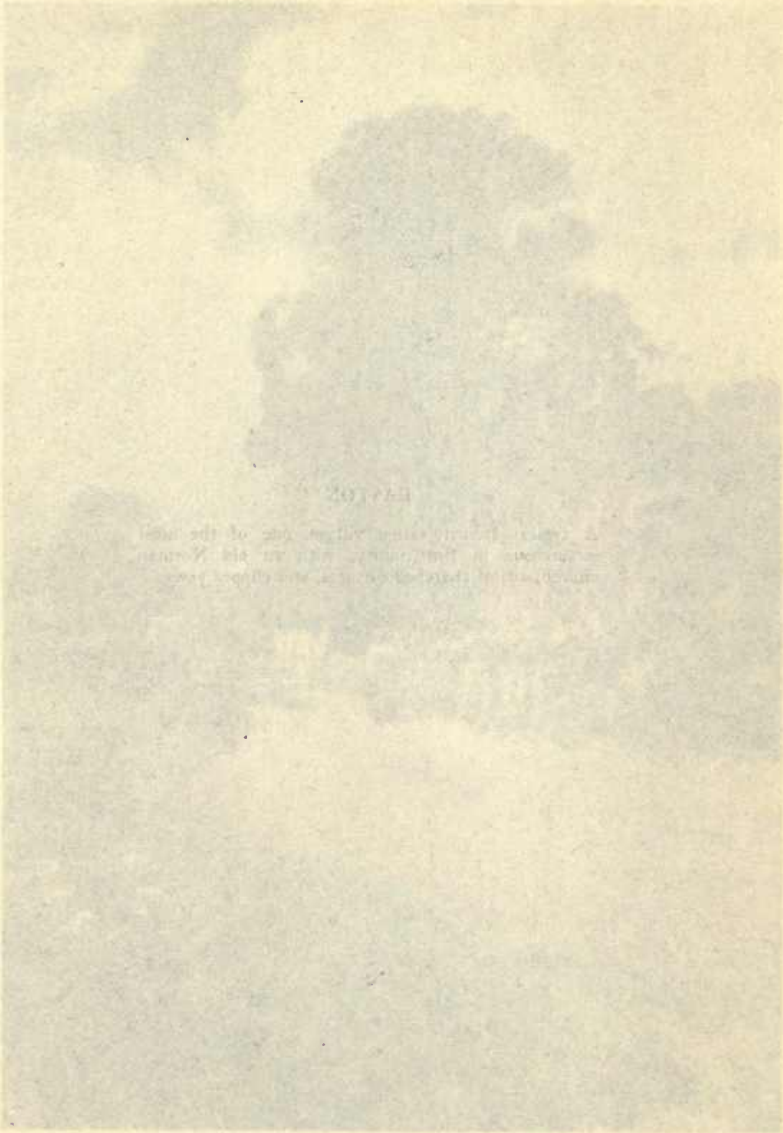
[1] Or *Hantachevesle* (the spelling is obscure).

during the fairs of St. Giles. The shieldmakers reflect its military importance, and the goldsmiths the rank and material wealth of those for whom it catered.

Naturally enough, many other interesting details are to be gathered incidentally, *e.g.* the names of the inhabitants, among which many names still familiar as distinctively Winchester names are to be found, and their various ranks and occupations. We read, for instance, of a market near the three minsters, of which the present Market Street is a survival; of 'estals,' or stalls, in the High Street, a reference with a curious modern echo, inasmuch as the stalls in the High Street and Broadway have been quite recently the source of much local heart-burning and contention; of 'escheopes,' or shops, which had belonged to the Confessor's queen, Edith; of reeves (*prepositi*), and of a 'stret bidel' (or *street beadle*). One curious entry relative to Eastgate speaks of certain steps which gave access to the church above the gate (*qdā grad*^{s} *ad ascendendā ad ecclam sup portā*), showing that King's Gate was not alone among the city gates in having a little church above it.

Another important feature we gain information on is the position of the Gilds. These trade organisations had now become important and fully organised; they served for the protection of their members, they made regulations for the conduct of the several trades, and their headquarters were used as clubs or places for general meeting and discussion—the latter including almost as a *sine qua non* ale-drinking, and that not always

in moderation. The Survey contains references to three halls or 'gild' headquarters—*Lachenictahalla* (or *chenictes' hall*) near Westgate, the *Chenichetehalla* near Eastgate (on the site of the present St. John's Rooms), and the *Hantachenesle in Colebrook Street.* What the very obscure term *Hantachenesle*, applied to the last named, means is a problem on which so far no satisfactory light has been thrown. Nor is it clear who the 'cnechts' or 'chenictes' were—whether, as is generally assumed, they were 'knights,' *i.e.* young men of rank, or 'cnechts,' *i.e.* sons of burghers not yet admitted to the 'Freedom.' We read that at the Chenichetehalla, the 'chènictes' drank their gild (*chenictehalla ubi chenictes potabant Gildam suam*), and at the Hantachenesle the 'approved' or freemen drank theirs (*Hantachenesle . . . . ubi pbi homiēs Went potabant Gildā suā*). That this beer-drinking was often inordinate we gather from various contemporary references, such as Anselm's rebuke of a certain monk who was given to frequenting the gilds and drinking deeply : *in multis inordinate se agit et maxime in bibendo ut in gildis cum ebriosis bibat.* There is also a reference to a '*Gihald*' or '*Gihalla*'—possibly a 'Gild' Hall,—and the Pipe Rolls of this reign mention a Tailors' Gild, and a *Chepemanesela*, or *Chapman's Hall.* The whole subject of these gilds, as well as of their halls, is one of great obscurity, and the references in the Winton Surveys, full of interest as they are, serve rather to whet our curiosity than to actually solve any problems they suggest.



EASTON

A typical Itchen valley village, one of the most picturesque in the county, with an old Norman church, quaint thatched cottages, and clipped yews.

Easton
Wilfrid Ball 1901

But whatever their exact function and organisation at the time, from them the important Merchant Gild grew, and its hall in High Street (on the site occupied now by the old Guildhall) was the centre for many years of corporate and civic rule, till the erection some forty years ago of the present and more pretentious Guildhall in the Broadway.

The whole circumstances of this so-called Winton Domesday are of unusual interest. The original MSS. exist, bound in an ancient leather binding, considered to be the work of contemporary Winchester craftsmen. These are now the property of the Society of Antiquaries.

Significant among other features of the mediaeval city was the Jewish quarter, or Ghetto, a survival of which we have in the present Jewry Street, at that time Scowertene Street. Abutting on this, in the rear of what are now the extensive premises of the George Hotel, dwelt the Jewish community, with a synagogue of its own, for the Jews were not merely tolerated here, but actually welcomed. The extensive commercial relations now rapidly developing between Winchester and the Continent were doubtless responsible for this, and the Jew in his ancient prescriptive capacity of banker was found to be an effective ally in building up the commercial importance of the rapidly developing city. References to the Jews at Winchester are fairly frequent all through the next two centuries, the period of Winchester's commercial prosperity. In Richard I.'s reign Richard of Devizes tells us of a Lombard Jew lending money

to the Priory of St. Swithun, and lamenting the leniency shown to them by Winchester ; while later on in the thirteenth century we read of a Jew—" Benedict, a son of Abraham "—being actually granted the full freedom of the city. These facts reveal to us the scope and the importance held by the Winchester of mediaeval times as an emporium and centre of commerce of more than local repute. But we are anticipating, and we must now return.

The remaining distinctive feature of the city to be noted was the monastic quarter, which occupied practically the whole area between High Street, Calpe Street, and the outer city wall. Foremost in importance was the great Convent of St. Swithun's—its great cathedral church forming its effective boundary to the north, its great gate opening into Swithun Street close to the little postern gate or King's Gate, and with the south-eastern edge of the city wall as its southern limit. Behind it, eastward, was the bishop's residence—Wolvesey, the ancient court of the Saxon kings—and flanking High Street at the eastern end was Nunna Mynstre, or St. Mary's Abbey, part of the revenues of which were derived from the tolls or octroi duties levied on commodities entering the East Gate.

Such then, in bare outline, was the Winchester of Henry's reign—not without its miseries, its injustices, it is true, but, as the times went, busy, prosperous, and developing. But this state of things was not to endure for long. Henry's heir, William, had perished in the *White Ship* ; and though he had done all he could to

avert it, the land was to be shortly handed over to a disputed succession and the horrors of civil war when he died. Winchester has good reason to cherish the memory of Henry I. and to recall his reign with satisfaction. He died in 1135, and was buried in Reading Abbey, which he had himself founded.

CHAPTER XII

A GREAT BISHOP, HENRY OF BLOIS

Let us now praise famous men. . . .
It was he that took thought for his people that they should not fall
And fortified the city against besieging.

Ecclesiasticus.

GREAT as has been the part played by kings in the history of our city, that played by bishops has been even greater still, and few among the makers of Winchester hold a more prominent or more honourable place than the great bishop who had succeeded to the see a few years before Henry I.'s death, Henry of Blois, brother of Stephen of Blois, now king of England, whose fortunes were to be closely linked during the two following reigns with those of our city.

A scheming statesman and an ardent churchman, he was to play a leading part in national affairs in the troublous times that were to follow—to direct his see for over forty years, and to leave indelible marks of his occupancy in the see and the city alike, of which St. Cross Hospital, Wolvesey ruins, the Cathedral font and portions of its fabric are but some of the most notable and most enduring.

A Great Bishop, Henry of Blois

And the times were troublous indeed. The *White Ship* tragedy had bereft not only the king of his heir, but the nation of a male claimant to the throne in the direct line, and all Henry's influence was insufficient to secure the crown for his daughter Matilda, the widowed Empress of Germany. The feeling of the time was adverse to having a female as sovereign ; and Stephen of Blois, Henry's nephew, actively championed by Bishop Henry, and strongly supported by the barons, bore down all active opposition.

But king though he was, Stephen's personal position was very different from that of his Norman predecessors. Brave and frank, but personally easy-going, dependent, moreover, on the goodwill of the powerful interests which had placed him on the throne, his authority was weak and his hold on his subjects ineffective. Barons and bishops strengthened themselves against him, and an era of castle-building commenced, which was to usher in a period of more terrible oppression than the country has ever witnessed before or since, for, secure in their strongholds, the Norman barons fastened themselves on the defenceless countryfolk like vultures on their prey, and there was none to make them relax their hold. As the *Chronicle* says :

> They filled the land with castles and they cruelly oppressed the wretched folk with castle works. When the castles were made they filled them with devils and evil men. When took they the men who they thought any goods to have both by night and by day, churls and women, they cast them in prison for their gold and silver, and they tortured them with pains

untellable—for never were any martyrs so tortured as they were. They hanged them up by the feet and smoked them with foul smoke—they hanged them by the thumbs or by the head and hanged fires upon their feet. . . . Many thousands they killed with hunger. . . . Then was corn dear and flesh, cheese and butter, for none there was in the land. . . . And they said openly that Christ slept and his saints.

Such was the anarchy, such the ruin, which weak rule had brought upon the realm.

Prominent among the castle-builders—though not among the oppressors—were certain of the bishops, and none more so than Bishop Henry. The bishop's residence at Wolvesey, the ancient seat of Alfred and the Saxon kings, he converted into a strong Norman fortress, the ruins of which still stand, while at Merdon (near Hursley, some five miles from the city), at Bishop's Waltham, and at Farnham, he reared fortresses also. Thus Winchester became remarkable in one respect—it had two fortress castles instead of one, a privilege it was later on to pay dearly for.

But Bishop Henry had other schemes too. Of royal birth, reared in the atmosphere of church ascendancy in the great and ambitious house of Cluny, and naturally masterful in temperament, he was aiming at higher rank and wider influence. Bishop of Winchester though he was, and Abbot of Glastonbury—for by special papal sanction he had been allowed to hold this valuable and influential office alike with his bishopric—there was still the archbishopric before him, and when in 1136 this fell vacant he seemed by every natural claim

to be marked out for it ; but Stephen had begun to feel his brother's yoke growing heavy on him, and after some long delay Bishop Henry was passed by and Theobald, Abbot of Bec, appointed. Henry was deeply mortified ; and though the Pope soon after appointed him as Papal Legate over Archbishop Theobald's head, his wounded pride never forgot the affront it had received.

Disappointed of his hopes of Canterbury he worked hard to persuade the Pope to divide England into three provinces instead of two, with Winchester diocese as the third archbishopric ; and though not actually successful in this, the Pope is said to have encouraged him in his project.

While matters were thus strained between the bishop and the king, Stephen, who had witnessed with alarm the growth of the castle-building and the power of the barons, determined to enforce his authority upon them. He called on several of the bishops to surrender their castles, and, being met by refusal, treated the Bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury with such cruelty and personal indignity that the latter died from the hardships inflicted on him. This act of unparalleled folly—for the person of a bishop was regarded as sacred—not only estranged public sympathy, but fanned to active flame the smouldering resentment of Bishop Henry. As Papal Legate he summoned Stephen to answer for his conduct before him at a council held at Winchester, and here the king was not only condemned, but even obliged to do penance. Stephen's position was gravely

compromised, and Matilda's supporters, who had long bided their time, broke into active opposition. Robert, Earl of Gloucester, her half-brother, took up arms in her behalf; Matilda landed at Arundel; and Stephen in fighting at Lincoln was taken prisoner.

Such an event seemed a token from heaven. Bishop Henry openly espoused Matilda's cause; he proclaimed her at Winchester as "Lady of the English." The city opened its gates to her, and she marched in in triumphal procession with all her forces and took possession of the Castle, while the occasion was celebrated by a solemn service of rejoicing in the Cathedral.

But this state of things was not to last. Arrogant and impracticable, she quickly alienated her own supporters, and finding the bishop by no means subservient, as she had expected, she summoned him to yield up his Castle of Wolvesey to her, to which summons he is said to have enigmatically replied, "I will prepare myself," and this he did. He repaired and strengthened his Castle and threw his influence again into the scale of Stephen. Thus civil war broke out once more, and for six years the country was torn again by every kind of evil and oppression. In these troubles Winchester, placed, as it were, between anvil and hammer, with the empress-queen in the Castle and the bishop at Wolvesey, suffered terribly. Raid and counter-raid, siege and counter-siege succeeded one another, till almost the whole city—houses, churches, monasteries alike—were consumed in the flames. Alswitha's foundation, Nunna Mynstre, or St. Mary's Abbey, parish

The Deanery
Winchester

THE DEANERY, WINCHESTER

One of the few remaining links with the conventual buildings of St. Swithun's Priory, which among the Benedictines were always placed on the south side of the minster. Formerly it was the quarters of the Prior of St. Swithun's. Philip of Spain was lodged here when he came to Winchester to marry Queen Mary of England.

churches, domestic buildings, all alike perished. Far and wide the flames spread—even the new building of Hyde Abbey, only erected some thirty-one years, was involved in the general conflagration. The Cathedral and St. Swithun's Priory alone escaped, and that, it is said, because Robert of Gloucester generously forbore reprisals.

But the empress's cause was a declining one, and though David, king of Scotland, and Robert of Gloucester stoutly attacked Wolvesey, it held out till relieved by Queen Matilda in person, and it was now the empress's turn to suffer siege in the Castle. Various accounts are given of what occurred; in one it is stated [1] that, being straitened for provisions, she escaped by feigning herself dead, and was carried out in a coffin. Be this as it may, her forces were routed—she fled, and both Robert of Gloucester and King David were taken prisoners. Finally, the war exhausted itself. The land was ruined, impoverished—nothing seemed left to strive for. Peace was made on terms of compromise, and King Stephen, restored to the throne, entered Winchester with the empress's son, Prince Henry, who was acknowledged as his heir. Stephen died soon after, and Henry II. became king.

And now matters went badly for Bishop Henry. Henry the king was determined to bring the castle-builders to book, and Henry the bishop was a foremost offender, and in addition he had to defend himself from charges brought against him by the monks of Hyde.

[1] Knighton's *De eventibus Angliae.*

In marked contrast with his behaviour elsewhere, Bishop Henry had acted oppressively against them, and when their abbey was destroyed he had even forced from them the ashes to which it had been reduced. No slight treasure the latter, for did they not contain the molten remains of cross and shrine and chalice, the cross of Cnut and Emma, their great prize and possession, and many another treasure, which though now but molten metal, still reckoned a value in thousands of pounds? Fortune was against the bishop, and he found it convenient to retire abroad, to Cluny and elsewhere, for a time, while the new king established his authority, made order in the distracted kingdom, and razed the offending fortresses to the ground. Thus while the bishop's palace at Wolvesey still remained, the Norman keep was dismantled and rendered harmless, and some of these ruins we can see there to-day.

The succeeding years were to present Bishop Henry in a less ambitious and altogether more attractive light. He had played for his great stake—played and lost: his legatine commission had expired, his archiepiscopal dream had rudely disappeared. His political power shattered, and his personal influence largely compromised, he was glad to make peace with the king and full restitution to the monks of Hyde, and he returned to his see to spend the last portion of his life—some fifteen or sixteen years—in acts of quiet episcopal rule and active beneficence. During his stay on the Continent he had amassed many treasures of art, and these he brought back with him—very probably the

wonderful and curious black stone font, one of a rare series of seven English fonts, four of which are in our own county and diocese, was placed by him in the Cathedral at this time. But a far nobler and more noticeable monument he was already rearing for himself in the outskirts of the city. Some mile down the valley, in the little village then known as Sperkforde, he had, in the early days of Stephen's reign, commenced to build a hospital or almshouse—the Hospital of St. Cross—and to this he now devoted himself.

Filled as the land then was with misery and ruin, relief of the hungry and distressed was a peculiarly pressing need, and the bishop's aim was to relieve distress. Following the hospitable example of the great Clugniac house in which he had been reared, the gates of St. Cross were to be ever open, ready to give kindly welcome to all who should enter there in want. Thirteen aged brethren were to be maintained in ease and comfort. One hundred of the poor of Winchester were to be regularly fed there in the "Hundred Mennes Hall," and seven poor Grammar School boys of Winchester—for Winchester had its Grammar School then, earlier even than the College of Wykeham—were likewise to be fed and provided for daily. In 1157 Bishop Henry committed the guardianship of his hospital to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, the Knights Hospitallers as they were called, whose special care was to aid wandering men, particularly the poor pilgrims visiting the Holy Sepulchre. And so the brethren of St. Cross wear

the black gown and the eight-pointed silver cross of the Knights of St. John to this day.

St. Cross is Bishop Henry's great memorial. He lived to see it firmly established, but otherwise in his later years he took but little part in public affairs. One of his last acts was to receive his cousin, the repentant King Henry, after the murder of à Becket, when he bade him welcome him with affectionate admonition and gave him his blessing. He died in 1171 and was buried in the Cathedral ; the tomb popularly designated William Rufus's Tomb has been thought to be his. Great and high-minded as a churchman, he had lived through the period of personal striving—" the fever, and the watching, and the pain " of self-advancement and of worldly ambition. His selfish schemes had died and nobler ones had succeeded, which revealed the man at his greatest and his best. Truly it might be said of him—

> That men may rise on stepping-stones
> Of their dead selves to higher things.

And St. Cross, at whose gates the needy wayfarer still receives hospitable welcome as he did in Bishop Henry's day, flourishes still, exercising a far wider measure of beneficence and power for good than its founder, in all probability, anticipated or even dreamed.

CHAPTER XIII

ANGEVIN AND PLANTAGENET

> Ay, that approves thee, tyrant, what thou art,
> No father, king, or shepherd of thy realm;
> But one that tears her entrails with thy hands,
> And like a thirsty tiger suck'st her blood.
>
> *Edward III.*

We need not stay to discuss in much detail the course of events during the reigns which followed. It was but a blackened and ruined Winchester which emerged from the disasters of the civil war. With two monasteries, some twenty churches, and most of the domestic dwellings consumed, it took her all her energies to reconstruct the desolate fabric; nor did she ever completely recover the blow. Hyde Abbey was at once recommenced, and gradually, but only very gradually, resumed its former importance. St. Mary's Abbey, too, was rebuilt, and Winchester, as the natural centre of the wool trade, was able steadily to recover her commercial activity, and managed to retain her importance as a centre of traffic and intercourse some two hundred years or more longer, but politically

her supremacy had departed for ever, and London henceforth was more and more to hold unchallenged sway.

Henry II.'s visits in Winchester were not frequent, and in addition were but casual. It was here, while recovering from illness, that he matured his great scheme for the administration of justice, the division of the country into circuits with itinerating judges of assize, to hold assizes or sittings for the due dispensation of the king's justice, from which circumstance Hampshire has always occupied a foremost position in the assize list, but Winchester was in no sense his capital.

Richard I. paid the city the compliment of coming here after his release from captivity to be crowned in the Cathedral, and though at the royal banquet following thereon the citizens of Winchester strove with those of London for the honour of serving the king with wine—a privilege involving the reversion of the golden goblet in which the wine was to be served —their claims were overruled and London bore off the prize.

More important were the building projects of the Bishop of Winchester, Bishop Godfrey de Lucy, who had succeeded to the see the year before Richard came to the throne. The pilgrim stream which flowed through Winchester had swollen to such proportions as to embarrass the monks of St. Swithun's. Bishop Godfrey formed a confraternity to raise funds and carry out an extension eastward of the fabric, to make it possible for the pilgrims to visit the shrine of the

saint without invading the body of the church, an extension which, owing to the limited area of firm ground on which the Cathedral stood, had to be made on an artificial foundation, in peaty and waterlogged soil, and to this fact must be in part attributed the insecurity of the fabric, which has necessitated the enormous and heroic labour of repair now actively in progress. Of this, however, more anon.

But Bishop Godfrey de Lucy had wider aims also. As bishop and receiver of the dues from St. Giles's Fair, the commercial prosperity of the city was of great moment to him, and he improved and developed the Itchen navigation by means of a canal —or "barge river," as it is termed—and constructed a huge reservoir at Alresford, much of which remains still as Alresford Pond, to retain the water necessary to keep the channel full. The trade of Winchester was evidently still a highly valuable asset.

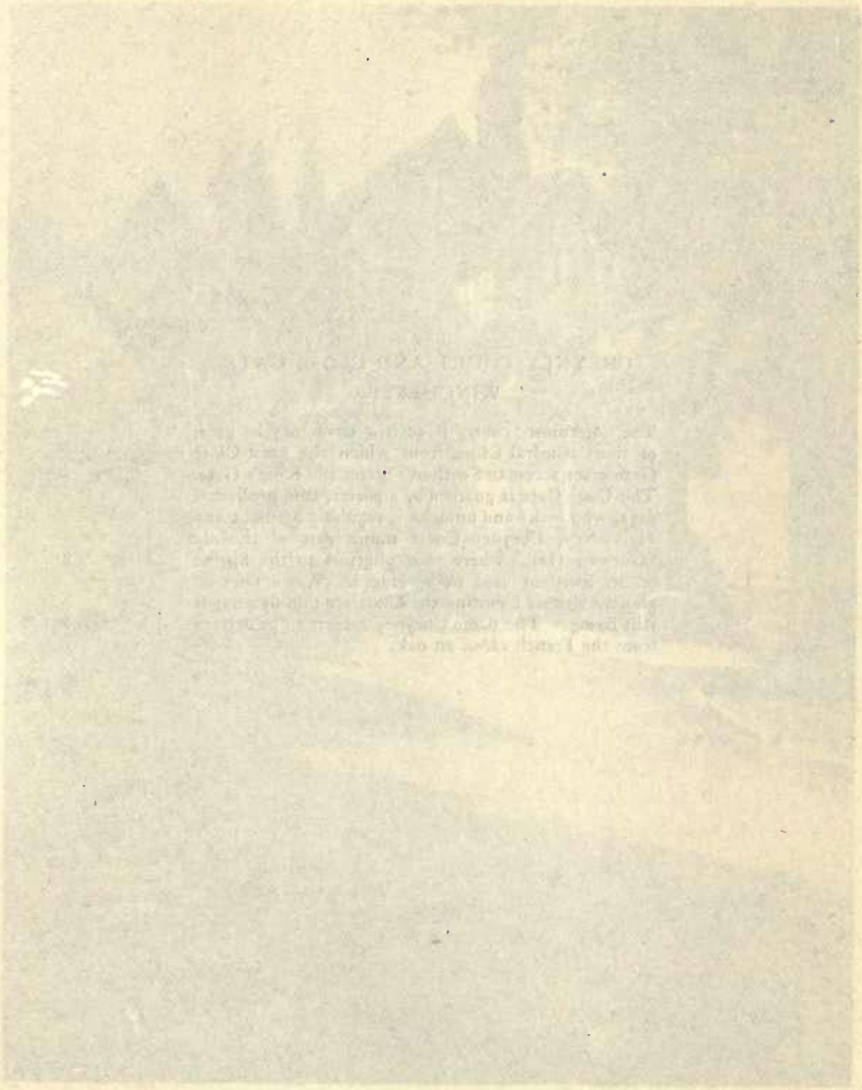
Of King John's reign we have memories in keeping with the general course of his doings. He was frequently here, hunting regularly in the forests all round the city, and here his son and successor, Henry of Winchester, afterwards Henry III., was born. It was at Winchester that John received Simon Langton and the other bishops exiled during the interdict, and in the chapter-house of the Cathedral that he received the papal absolution for his offences against Holy Church. But the peace thus dishonourably ushered in was of short duration, and a year or so later Winchester was in foreign hands, being held by Louis,

Dauphin of France, whom the barons had invited over to expel John from the throne.

But when John died, as he did shortly afterwards, the barons withdrew their support from the Dauphin, and John's son Henry, then a lad of nine years old only, ascended the throne—Henry III., Henry of Winchester.

We cannot give in full the story of Henry, interesting and important as it is, and intimately associated as much of it was with our city; for Henry was here continually, he made it his chief residence, and in the years that followed Winchester had often reason to pay dear for his attachment to his parent city. Wild disorder, riot and revel, profuse expenditure and pinch of consequent poverty, anarchy and siege and civil warfare in her streets, all followed in turn, till order was at last evolved, and dignified and noble parliaments assembled in her Castle Hall, the symbol of the reign of law that was to follow, and the earnest of that rule by representative assembly which has made our nation—and almost Winchester herself—the mother of parliaments, honoured through the length and breadth of the world.

Chequered as the reign was to be, the early years were quiet and prosperous, till Henry's evil genius, Peter de Rupibus, Bishop of Winchester, gained ascendancy over the king. The king's marriage to a French princess, Eleanor of Provence, followed, and the king, under the influence of a foreign wife, and a prelate and justiciar of alien sympathies, entered on a



CHEYNEY COURT AND CLOSE GATE, WINCHESTER

The outermost 'court,' if such a term may be used, of the Cathedral Close, from which the great Close Gate gives access to Swithun's Street and King's Gate. The Close Gate is guarded by a porter, as in mediaeval days, who locks and unlocks it regularly by night and day. Near Cheyney Court stands part of the old 'Guesten Hall,' where poor pilgrims to the Shrine of St. Swithun used to be lodged. Weird tales of ghostly visitors haunting the Close are told by persons still living. The name Cheyney appears to be derived from the French *chêne*, an oak.

CHEYNEY COURT
WINCHESTER

reckless course of extravagance and anti-national policy which estranged all his subjects' sympathies. To all posts of honour and preferment, whether civil or ecclesiastical, foreign claimants were preferred, and the land groaned under the tyranny of alien domination, while its resources were being drained away from it to provide revenues for foreign beneficiaries abroad. Protest after protest, discontent, active opposition, ridicule, and remonstrance were all in vain. The king was once significantly asked by the witty Roger Bacon what dangers by sea a skilful pilot would most avoid, and on evading the question was told 'Petrae et rupes' (*stones and rocks*), a faintly-veiled allusion to the chief influence for evil in the state. But all was in vain, and at last armed opposition could no longer be prevented, and the barons under Simon de Montfort broke out into open revolt.

In the Barons' War which followed, Hampshire and Winchester were intimately involved. It has been the fate of Winchester, almost from early Saxon days, to have within more than one rallying point for popular sympathy, and so to suffer peculiarly at all crises of national division ; and so it was now.

Few in the land had suffered more acutely from the king's policy of preferring aliens than the monks of St. Swithun, and when the Barons' War broke out the monks of the convent sided strongly with De Montfort. The citizens, however, held loyally to the king, and thus it came about that when in May 1264,

a few days before the battle of Lewes, De Montfort marched against the city, the citizens rose against the convent, fearing lest the monks, who controlled part of the walls and the King's Gate, should welcome the invaders and admit them to the city. A violent attack was made on them, the Close Gate was burnt down, and the invading citizens burst their way in and slew several of the monks. The fire spread to the King's Gate and burnt it down ; and when later on the gate was rebuilt, the monks of St. Swithun built above it a little church for the use of the lay servitors of the convent, and so the little church—now the parish church of St. Swithun's, Winchester—came into existence, perched in mid air above the little postern gate. Nor was this all, for the year after, when Simon de Montfort the younger appeared again in arms before the city walls, the monks actually admitted him, and a wild night followed in Winchester ; his troops revenged themselves on the defenceless citizens for their opposition by burning and plundering a portion of the city, and putting many of them to the sword. But the ascendancy of the barons was but brief, for in the same year, 1265, Prince Edward defeated and slew De Montfort at the battle of Evesham, rescued his father, and restored him to the throne.

A memorable year was this both for England and for Winchester, for Henry summoned to Winchester his first representative Parliament, notable because for the first time representatives of the cities and boroughs appeared there with knights of the shires, along with

the barons and prelates, and the abbots and priors of the leading monasteries. The Prior of St. Swithun's and the Abbot of Hyde were both present at that remarkable assembly. In 1268 a second Parliament assembled at Winchester, and four years later the king died, and Edward I. became king.

Henry III.'s reign was indeed a notable one for the city, and one notable addition he made to it remains still as one of its foremost architectural and historical treasures. This is the great and noble hall which he added to the castle, and which retains still, with some alteration, much of its original character. Many a notable scene has this noble hall witnessed, both during Henry's reign and since, the early Parliaments of 1265 and 1268 pre-eminent among them. One such dramatic scene was the one related in full by Matthew of Paris, as occurring in 1249, when the king unmasked and brought to justice a confederacy of robbers who had conspired to waylay the highways and rob the passers-by. None were safe from them : even the king's own consignments of wine, coming to Winchester, were stopped and plundered. Matters were in this state of insecurity when the king, coming to Winchester, was approached by some Brabantine merchants, who complained that they had been stopped on the highroad near Winchester and robbed of 200 marks. The king's anger boiled over, and in hot indignation he ordered the castle gates to be shut, and a jury empanelled then and there to find and disclose the offenders. The twelve citizens thus appointed pleaded inability to throw light on the

matter, but the king, not to be thwarted, shouted, "Carry away those artful traitors; bind them, and cast them into the dungeons below, and let me have twelve other men, good and true, who will tell us the truth."

The second jury, with the fear of death thus before them, promptly displayed quicker powers of perception, and laid before the king the detects of a widespread conspiracy, in which many leading men of the city and neighbourhood, as well as of the king's household, whose pay was probably long in arrear, were implicated. And so justice was done, and for a while travelling abroad was safer.

Thus, now through good report, now through evil, the fortunes of our city waxed and waned, but, in a sense, her day was over. Mediaeval Winchester more and more grew to assume the character of a purely provincial city; one with importance, indeed, with prestige and dignity, but from which, like the so-called 'buried cities' of the Zuyder Zee, the wide shores whereon the tides of major national circumstance ebbed and flowed, continually receded more and more, while her citizens found themselves less and less 'going down in ships' to the broad sea of national life, and 'occupying their business' in those 'great waters.'

CHAPTER XIV

FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURY WINCHESTER

What do you lack, what do you buy, mistress? a fine hobby horse to make your son a tilter? a drum to make him a soldier? a fiddle to make him a reveller? what is't you lack? BEN JONSON.

IT is pleasant to turn away from the direct stream of the national flood, and to explore some of the by-streams, the more local whirls and eddies in the life of our city, and this theme is naturally suggested by the thought of Winchester in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when imperial politics had largely ceased to affect her, and the wider growth of interests and domestic features had given her life within a greater diversity, and rendered possible a minuter degree of specialization.

Interest in the main centres round her civic rule, the pilgrim stream, the great annual Fair of St. Giles, and the domestic architecture, while supreme over all these was the dominating interest and control exercised by the ecclesiastical powers within her—the sway of the crozier and the tonsure, the cloister and the cowl. We shall deal in this chapter with the city at large,

leaving to the chapter following the more purely monastic aspects.

The city as a city had been growing—as always was the case with mediaeval towns closely walled in—continually more and more congested. The south-eastern quarter occupied by the Convent of St. Swithun's, with its Cathedral and great churchyard, the adjoining Abbey of St. Mary, and the bishop's residence at Wolvesey, was a lung open indeed and well ventilated, but elsewhere the hemmed in area was a maze of narrow and crowded thoroughfares, with houses, whose curiously timbered, but inconveniently picturesque fronts, almost jostled one another across the narrow passage-ways between,—houses, of the type still to be seen in the so-called 'Old Rectory' in Cheesehill Street, in the pseudo-antique houses in 'the Brooks,' in Mr. Mayne's Tudor House near the Butter Cross, and the present Godbegot House almost opposite, of later date though most of these be—as if the chief office of neighbourly regard of a mediaeval dwelling to those round her was not merely to

> Not beteem the winds of Heaven,
> Visit *their* face too roughly,

but also to religiously exclude that indiscreet and unwelcome intruder, the all-prying and inquisitive sun, while through many of the low-lying streets ran broad and open ditches, not always, alas! the *dulcia et piscosae flumina aquae*, the sweet refreshing streams which Precentor Wulfstan had once commemorated,—streams whose channels flow now in well-regulated

courses, some open, some underground, but which then made their way, often through filth and accumulated garbage, in far less well-ordered circulation through the city.

Though the city, judged by contemporary standards, might be a 'joly cité,' of which

> The aere was god both inne and oute,

it must have fallen far short of almost every modern standard of health and convenience, and its narrow, confined, and ill-cleansed courts were the lurking-places of contagion and of never wholly absent plague.

The civic management was a strange, incongruous muddle of overlapping and conflicting authorities, each jealous of its own influence and envious of its neighbour's. The authority of the gilds had now become crystallized into a corporation of more or less definite form, the Mayor and Bailiffs, who exercised the controlling influence over the major part of the city. When exactly a 'Mayor' first came into existence is unknown. The civic records go back, indeed, to a certain Florence de Lunn in 1184, though he can hardly be accepted as a 'mayor' in the technical sense, but the Mayor only exercised authority over the population within the walls, and 'the Liberties,' as they were called, were excluded from his jurisdiction. Of these there were two, the Liberty of the Soke, the region, that is, beyond the walls to the east and north, over which the Bishop had supreme jurisdiction, and which he entrusted to the care of a special officer, the Bailiff of the Soke, and

the Liberty of Godbiete, the little manor within the city granted by Queen Emma to the Convent of St. Swithun, from the church tower of which curfew rang, and within whose 'liberties,' as already stated, no officer bearing warrant, whether of king, mayor, or bishop, might enter. This tripartite division of authority, in which the civic, episcopal, and monastic powers were mutually confronted, formed a cunningly devised preserve, in which the dexterous fisher in the troubled waters of the day might ply his angle with rarely successful result.

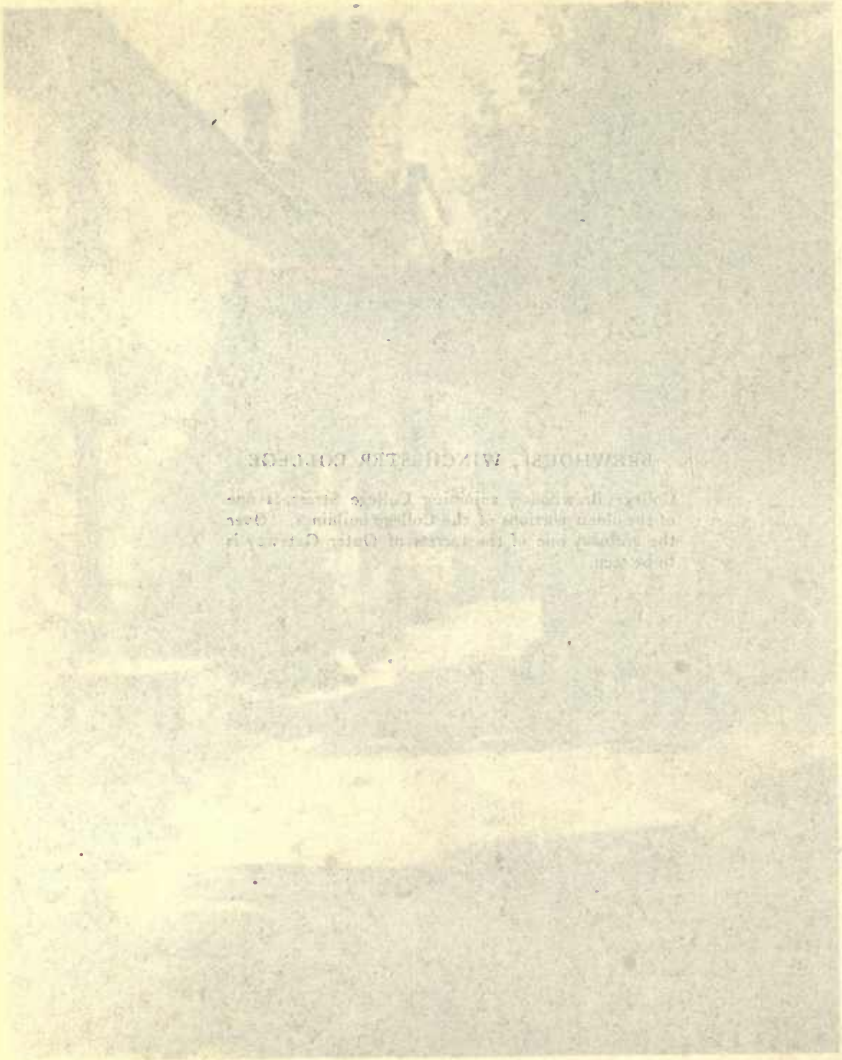
The dominating commercial interest was the Wool Trade. England was famous for wool, and to this trade Winchester, as a natural centre with Southampton as her port, owed her prosperity.

North of the High Street, not far from the Westgate, stood the great Hall where the wool was brought and sampled, and here the great Tron or weighing machine was kept on which the wool was weighed. In Edward III.'s time the Winchester wool trade was at its height. His wars with France, really undertaken to enable him to control the Channel, and so to keep the trade with Flanders in his own hands, had prospered, and when he introduced his famous wool-stapling measure, by which 'staples' or exclusive wool markets were set up in ten towns in England, of which Winchester was one, the commercial prosperity of the city increased by leaps and bounds. But, alas! Edward's policy was only too successful. The Flanders trade was considered more important than local English

Wilfrid Ball
1907
The Brewhouse
Winchester College

BREWHOUSE, WINCHESTER COLLEGE

College Brewhouse, adjoining College Street, is one of the oldest portions of the College buildings. Over the archway one of the turrets of Outer Gateway is to be seen.



interests, and when, some years after, he appointed Calais as the staple town, and removed the staple from Winchester, the days of the commercial prosperity of our city were numbered.

But while the wool trade lasted,—and it only died out as such trades do by degrees,—Winchester with all its limitations must have been a rarely interesting and attractive place in which to "catch the manners fleeting as they rise." It is much to be regretted that the Winchester of this period had no shrewd and genial humorist, no Chaucer or Jonson, to mingle with the crowd, and to preserve for us, whether by pen or pencil, the humours of the day, —the varied types, lay and cleric, monk, friar, pilgrim, merchant, or franklin, who might have been found periodically gathered either at the Wool Market or the Hall of the Gild merchant, or at 'the George,' —for there was a 'George' at Winchester then, even as now,—in as full and diverting variety as ever foregathered at the Tabard itself; but interesting as those intrinsically were, their interest was as nothing beside the two great dominating attractions which periodically gathered all sorts and conditions of men for temporary hospitality within her walls, the pilgrimages, and the great Fair of St. Giles. And if it was the Wool Trade which made the Fair, equally it was the Fair which gave the city its notoriety and its commercial importance. And the Fair while it lasted dominated everything—not only was all ordinary business suspended, but even the jurisdiction of the ordinary civic authorities was

equally subject to its influence, and the already complex problem of civic rule was rendered topsy-turvy by a temporary transfer of authority within the city area from the Mayor to the Bailiff of the Soke,—a glorious opportunity for paying off old scores, which many a modern local administrator might well envy him.

The early history of the Fair we have already touched on. A fair had been held on St. Giles's Hill since very early days, and with the strange incongruity of association characteristic of early times, fairs were for a long time regularly held in churchyards. But the Fair of St. Giles had long since outgrown the limits of the little churchyard of St. Giles, on the hill which bears his name, and successive charters of William II. and later sovereigns had made the rights and profits of the Fair the perquisite and privilege of the Bishop of Winchester, who had the power of exclusive trading within the area of the Fair during its duration. Originally granted for three days, Henry I. had extended the period to eight, Stephen to fourteen, and Henry II. to sixteen, and this period was confirmed in the last charter granted for the Fair, viz., that given by Edward III. in 1349, in which all the privileges of the Fair were rehearsed and solemnly confirmed. The procedure connected with the Fair was minute and formal. On the 31st of August, the Eve of St. Giles, the Bishop took possession, as it were, by setting up his court in the *Pavilionis Aula*, or Hall of the Pavilion, on the top of the hill. The court being formally constituted, Justiciaries or Bailiffs

of the Fair were appointed, who at once proceeded either to Southgate or Kingsgate, where the Mayor, Bailiffs, and citizens of Winchester were required to meet them, and dutifully to deliver up the keys of the gate, and from thence to accompany them in turns to the Westgate, the Wool Staple, and the other gates in succession, and to deliver up the keys of each, while the Fair was solemnly proclaimed and the transfer of authority effected. The proclamation made forbade the buying and selling, while the Fair lasted, of articles of general merchandise, other than food, anywhere in Winchester or within seven leagues' radius (10½ *miles*), except within the limits of the Fair itself.

This done, the humiliation of the Mayor and Bailiffs was completed by their being required to humbly attend the usurping authorities to the Bishop's Pavilion, thenceforward to submit to their jurisdiction, with what grace they might, till the Fair was over. Nor was it only at Winchester that the Fair was proclaimed—Southampton, though actually beyond the seven leagues' radius, was included in the prohibited area, and here and at all important points on the boundary of the Fair zone, the same proclamation was made and formal possession taken. Nor was it only smuggling that the Fair officials had to guard against. Outlaws of the Robin Hood type—of whom the notorious Adam of Gurdon, Bailiff of Alton, and Lord of the Manor of Selborne, was perhaps the most famous—were accustomed to lay in wait and levy blackmail on merchants and travellers who had business at the Fair, and at all particularly

dangerous spots, such as the Pass of Alton, as it was called, the spot on the road from London to Alton where the thick woodland made highway robbery a comparatively easy matter, sergeants, armed and mounted, were stationed to keep the Pass.

The Fair itself was a veritable town of booths or stalls within a wooden palisade, each quarter or 'street' within it taking its name from the merchandise displayed or the nationality of the traders who occupied it. Then there were the Spicery—the general grocery, or trade in sugar, spices, and preserved fruits, in which the monks of St. Swithun traded largely—the Pottery—the Stannary (or Falconry)—the 'stret' of the Flemings, of the Genoese, of the Cornishmen ; and the prices paid were high, for a high 'tariff wall' surrounded the Fair. On a burden borne by one man was levied a penny, on a cask of wine or cyder fourpence, for a falcon twopence, for an ape or bear—animals much affected as butts and playthings by the great, and even by the monks—fourpence. Multiplying these by twelve, as is customarily done, to reduce them to modern values, we realise how heavy these tolls were. Nor were luxuries and alcoholic drinks the only article taxed. The raw material paid toll too : every bale of wool fourpence, of which twopence went to the Bishop, and twopence, to conciliate popular support evidently, to the check weighman. Plantagenet times were not a Cobdenite millennium ; and, probably, could a ballot have been taken at the time, while the monks and the Bishop's 'menie' would undoubtedly have voted for Tariff

Reform, very few Winchester citizens—though the Fair was profitable enough to them in reality—would have polled with them.

Within the Fair itself, the *mise en scène* and the humours of the crowd would have presented a subject fully worthy of Ben Jonson himself, and it is safe to say that no human concourse, not even Bartholomew Fair in its most palmy days, could have taxed his genius more than St. Giles's Fair during the Edwardian régime would have done. Motley, indeed, was the crowd gathered here—Jews and Normans, Poles and Italians, strolling minstrels, quacks and jugglers, ballad-mongers and fortune-tellers, thieves and swaggerers, Corporal Nyms and Ancient Pistols, rogues and sharpers of every kind, cheating, swearing, dancing, quarrelling, drinking, —hawk-eyed chapmen and hard-visaged countrymen, each alike bent on cheapening the other's demands, huckstering, gesticulating, and chaffering in strange dialects and all but unknown tongues—while here and there vigilant assizemen, wearing the Bishop's livery, passed eager-eyed amidst them, keenly scenting out deficient weight or cozening ell-wand, for in spite of severe penalties imposed on all detected in such practices, the Fair was pre-eminently a place where

nobody's virtue was over nice,

and all the 'tricks of the trade' flourished in a congenial soil. Thus Harvey, prentice to Symme atte Stile, who tells us in Langland's "Piers Ploughman," how

at Wye and Wynchestre I went to the faire,

lifts up some part of the veil for us, telling us that

wikkedlych to weye (*wickedly to weigh*)

was his first lesson.

We have already spoken of the Bishop's Court or *Pavilionis Aula*. Here the Bailiffs and Justiciaries of the Fair met, not merely to make regulations, but to dispense justice, for the *Pavilionis Aula* was also a court of summary jurisdiction, a 'piepowder court,' *cour des pieds poudreux* or dusty-foot justice, that is, where the wily Autolycus, or Artful Dodger of the day, or other picker up of unconsidered trifles, was awarded short shrift and well-earned punishment either in stocks or pillory, or in the Bishop's dungeon under Wolvesey Palace.

Such then for some three hundred years was the great Fair of the Festival of St. Egidius. For many years it survived, even though trade in Winchester was falling off and doomed, but it could not survive indefinitely. In Henry VI.'s time a distinct falling off was apparent; since then it has dwindled gradually bit by bit, till now the only tangible memorial remaining is the name of the Bishop's court, the *Pavilionis Aula*, the ghostly footfall of which seems still to be re-echoed in the name "Palm Hall," a well-known residence standing on the brow of the hill where 'all the fun of the Fair' sparkled and bubbled so many hundreds of years before.

Side by side with the Fair was the Pilgrim stream, which too reached its height about this period. We

have seen how early in Edward the Elder's reign the shrine of St. Josse in Newan Mynstre attracted pilgrims to Winchester and gave it a reputation—a reputation which the enshrinement in Edgar's reign of Swithun's bones enormously added to. Tales of miracle were circulated, widespread and equally widely credited, cripples were healed, the lame walked, and St. Swithun's became the most popular pilgrimage centre in all Southern England. From Henry II.'s reign, though the shrine of Becket rose into importance, St. Swithun's did not abate in popularity, and the stream of pious, dust-laden feet still flowed just the same to and from it, save that many going on pilgrimage would visit the shrines of both St. Thomas and St. Swithun on their way. Rich and poor, a-foot or in the saddle, they streamed into Winchester as soon as the pilgrim season—the early spring, that is,—arrived. As Chaucer tells us :

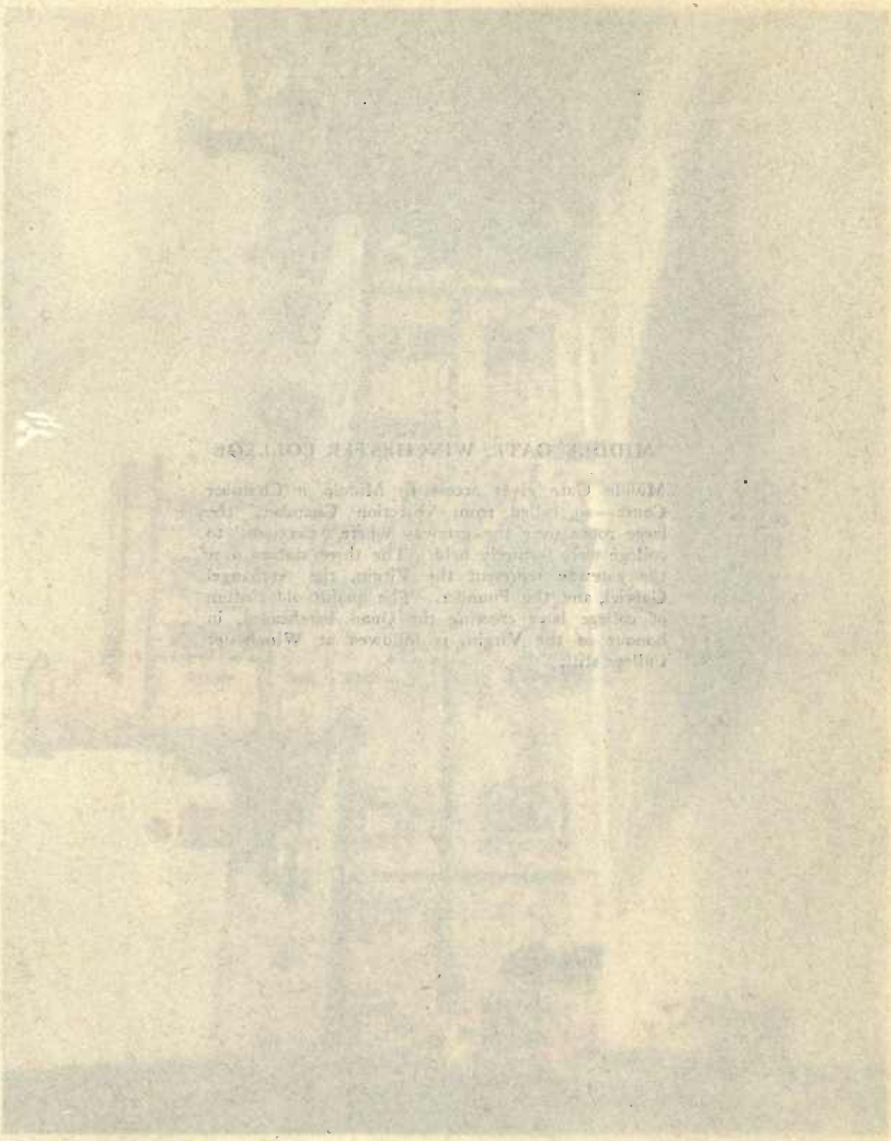
> Whan that Aprille with his showrès swoote
> The drought of Marche hath percèd to the roote,
> . . . . . .
> Thanne longen folk to gon on pilgrimages.

The wealthier lodged in hostelries and inns, the poorer found shelter and hospitality within the walls of convent or nunnery. From south and west they came —over the Roman road from Sarum and along the Itchen valley from Southampton, turning aside to visit St. Cross and receive the wayfarer's dole of bread and beer, till they reached the gates of St. Swithun's or of Hyde. St. Swithun's was the chief place of resort.

Here within the Pilgrim's or Guesten Hall, the greater part of which still stands, a rough but welcome bed awaited them, while at the buttery a plentiful meal of broken victuals and beer was to be had for the asking. Then next morning after mass they would be admitted to the shrine, to say their prayers, make their humble offering, and depart.

An unwholesome and unsavoury enough crowd, doubtless, in the main—travel-stained, footsore, and unwashed, disease accompanied them, frequently enough, from centre to centre, just as plague follows nowadays the eastern lines of pilgrimage in India and Arabia —and not even all their piety and devotion could sufficiently endear them to the monks of St. Swithun as to make them personally acceptable, and secure unrestricted welcome for them within their church and monastery.

Accordingly, though allowed to enter the Cathedral freely, their liberty within it was circumscribed. Admitted to the north transept by a special door—the Pilgrim's door, now walled up—they could make their way into Godfrey de Lucy's retro-choir, the great extension east of the high altar, where the shrine of the saint was placed. So much and no more of the Cathedral was open to them, for at the head of the presbytery steps, leading down to the south transept and nave, massive iron-work gates barred the way ; the gates are to be seen still, though long since removed to near the western entrance of the Cathedral. And so their devotions ended, they would journey on—on



MIDDLE GATE, WINCHESTER COLLEGE

Middle Gate gives access to Middle or Chamber Court—so called from 'Election Chamber,' the large room over the gateway where 'elections' to college were formerly held. The three statues over the gateway represent the Virgin, the Archangel Gabriel, and the Founder. The quaint old custom of college boys crossing the Quad bareheaded, in honour of the Virgin, is followed at Winchester College still.

Middle Gate
Winchester College

to the great Abbey of Hyde, then on to Headbourne Worthy church, to visit the Saxon rood at its western end, then on by Alton and Farnham, probably to rest for the night in the great Cistercian Abbey of Waverley hard by, and so on by Guildford and St. Martha's to Canterbury—a well-defined route clearly marked even now for much of its length, and still known as the Pilgrim's way. So great a vogue did the pilgrimage craving become that at length it had to be controlled and forbidden by law. Yet the pilgrimage had its uses—the open-air journey, severe though its hardships were to the ill-found and poorly shod, served, doubtless, as a magnificent tonic, both mental as well as bodily, and must have done much to correct the terrible insularity of ideas which a population otherwise chained to the soil must otherwise have engendered. Nor, in all probability, was the belief in the efficacy of pilgrimages in the cure of diseases, particularly mental ones, without at least some substantial basis of truth.

As in the case of Henry of Hoheneck, so also, *mutatis mutandis*, might many a pilgrim to Winchester have had it said of him :

> And he was healed in his despair
> By the touch of *St. Swithun's* bones,
> Though I think the long ride in the open air,
> That pilgrimage over stocks and stones,
> In the miracle must come in for its share.

A miracle none the less pronounced because the air of Hampshire Downs had been a potent but unrealized contributory factor in the result.

CHAPTER XV

THE MONASTIC LIFE

Grosse Städte, reiche Klöster
Schaffen, dass mein Land den euren
Wohl nicht steht an Schätzen nach.

KERNER, *Der reichste Fürst.*

BUT active as were the currents that circulated in and round the gilds, the wool markets, the annual fair, and the pilgrimage resorts, the dominating stream was that which flowed through the monastic channel, and over mediaeval Winchester the influence of the monastery in one form or other, whether of priory, abbey, or nunnery, or whether of the mendicant orders, or nursing sisterhoods, now for a considerable time firmly established in the city, was supreme.

The Priory was a secluded area, the privacy of which was jealously guarded. The Cathedral itself, from the eastern angle of the north transept to the southern corner of the west front, formed the effective boundary on the city side, with the great churchyard lying between it and the city proper. The remainder was supplied by the high close-wall running all round it,

much as the greater part of it does now, flanked to the east by the boundary of the Bishop's residence at Wolvesey, and forming, with the latter, part of the external defences of the city, so that between them the monks and the Bishop relieved the citizens of something like a quarter of the burden—a heavy one at that time—of keeping the walls in repair and defending them if attacked.

The main entrance was then, as now, the great close-gate, opening into Swithun's Street near Kingsgate,—the point of attack in the troubles of 1264—and besides this a small postern or opening gave access from 'Paradise'—as the area east of the northern transept was and still is called—to Colebrook Street and Pater-noster Row. From the churchyard to the domestic quarter no direct means of access existed; the 'Slype' or passage through the great south-western buttress was not yet made, and to pass from the west part into the cloister it was necessary to pass through the Cathedral itself.

The domestic buildings—as was always the case with the Benedictines, and St. Swithun's was a Benedictine house—were grouped on the south. The cloister garth was a square enclosure, south of the nave, roofed overhead and flagged below, but otherwise open to the air, with the open lavatory or general washing-place in the centre. This was the monks' usual place of resort, except when the services in church or special duties called them elsewhere. Here, half in the open air, they read, they studied, laboured at the occupations of the

scriptorium, the illuminated missal or book of the 'Hours.' Here was their library, and here the *magister ordinis* held his school for novices, a school where the instruction, however, was not, as is commonly supposed, the humanities or even divinity, but the rule of the order of St. Benedict, to be, to the monk, from the moment he had taken the vows, more than his conscience. Here in the cloister, too, the monks enjoyed such minor relaxations as fell to their lot. Here they took their 'meridian' or mid-day siesta ; and here, for all the world like great schoolboys—whenever, that is, the prying eyes of Sacrist or Precentor were not upon them —they even indulged at times in harmless but unauthorized gossip and "snatched a fearful joy."

Grouped round the cloister garth—their site now occupied by canons' houses—were the domestic buildings proper : the kitchen to the west, the refectory on the south. On the east—its Norman arches still in part standing—was the Chapter House, where the Prior held a chapter daily for the regulation of the internal routine, and for the admonition or correction of offenders against the discipline. South of this, where now the Deanery stands, were the Prior's quarters. Farther to the east were the sleeping quarters, the 'dortour' or common dormitory, the sick house or infirmary, and so forth ; while standing by itself at some little distance in the outer court—Mirabel Close as it was called—was the Pilgrims' hall, where the poorer pilgrims were lodged, and now almost the only part of the domestic buildings of the monastery still standing.

The Monastic Life

At the period we are speaking of monastic life had assumed a character entirely different from what it had borne in Saxon and Norman days. Poverty, obedience, chastity, and toil had been not only the motto, but actually the practice, of the earlier monk. He had not only prayed and wept, and denied himself ease and creature comforts — his life had been one unceasing round of severe bodily labour. His own efforts had sufficed for his daily wants, and in ministering to them, he had taught the savage people round him the arts of agriculture, he had reclaimed the waste lands, and had literally made the wilderness to blossom like the rose. But this active, simple phase had passed away. Monasteries like St. Swithun's or Hyde now performed important ceremonial and social duties of an official character. The Prior of St. Swithun's kept lordly state ; the Abbot of Hyde wore a mitre. These monasteries controlled extensive interests, swayed large estates, held much church patronage, and extended generous hospitality to high and low alike. The simple organisation of earlier times now no longer sufficed, and a considerable retinue of lay brothers was considered necessary for the domestic service of the monastery, while the more purely spiritual duties alone were performed by the monks themselves. The monk was thus left free to pray and study, to perform his regular offices, and keep his 'hours' strictly, and only the more responsible of the domestic duties or those of supervising the several departments of activity were assigned to those who had taken the vow. The lay

brethren or retainers performed the menial duties, and were so completely separate from the brethren in orders that they were even excluded from their churches. Thus the little parish church of St. Swithun perched above Kingsgate was set apart for the lay servants of the Priory, and the parish church of St. Bartholomew, Hyde, in like manner for those of Hyde Abbey. Probably few at that day could have foreseen that the churches built for the lay retainers would prove more enduring than the great monasteries themselves. Thus, spiritually speaking, the monasteries were, if not actually dead, at least moribund. Shut in from the world outside they affected less and less the stream of general spiritual life, and gradual atrophy of spiritual powers followed inevitably on the failure to exercise them.

Yet it would be a profound mistake to infer—as one easily might, particularly if one were guided by popular pictorial representations of it—that the life of the fourteenth century monk was one of ease and enjoyment. In reality it was one of severe discipline and self-repression. The eight daily services of the hours beginning at midnight with nocturnes, and ending at evening with compline, with the enforced vigils and broken periods of sleep they entailed, were but a part of the regular daily obligation. In addition there were masses to be said, study and reading in the cloister, the labours of teaching and of the scriptorium. It is a somewhat cheap sneer to set down the monk as merely indolent or self-indulgent, but his life certainly

tended as a rule more to deaden than to exalt, and the monk entered the cloister only too often to discover nothing but a limited outlook and a dreary round of humdrum trivialities, instead of the religious peace and the beatific vision he had expected.

The brethren who controlled the various departments of monastic economy were termed *Obedientiarii*, or brethren yielding obedience to the Prior, and responsible to him for performance of their respective duties. The Prior was over all, and next to him was the Sub-prior. The church was looked after by the Sacrist and the Precentor. These regulated the services, while the latter in addition was responsible for the discipline. He was the general policeman, a kind of peripatetic conscience, imposing silence in the cloister, and checking illicit conversation, and particularly on the alert during nocturnal service, lest the burden of drowsiness should prove too heavy for any of the worshippers. Armed with a lantern he stole from brother to brother, and if any was found nodding he placed the lantern at the offender's feet, who, thus detected and openly shamed, was required to take up, as it were, the 'fiery cross,' and bear it on until he should find another guilty like himself, in which case he might pass the unwelcome task on to his companion in disgrace—a kind of monastic game of touch, not without its humorous side. The manager of the estates was the Receiver or Treasurer, the chief domestic official the Hordarian or Steward, others were the *Custos operum* or Keeper of the Fabric, the Cellarer, the

Almoner, the Master of the Novices, or *Magister ordinis*, the Gardener, and so on.

A somewhat full collection of Obedientiary Rolls, or official accounts of St. Swithun's Priory, still exists, and much valuable and interesting information has been rendered accessible to the general public by Dean Kitchen, who has edited them, and from these we can learn full details of the daily life, dietary, and operations of the monks of St. Swithun. They had two main meals a day, with certain other opportunities for minor refreshment. Bread, cheese, meat, fish, and eggs appear to have been freely provided, though it must be remembered that there were always guests as well as the monks to be catered for. On fast days 'drylinge,' or salt fish, and mustard figured largely, the mustard serving as a corrective to the unpalatable fare, and doubtless, too, a useful tonic to bodies which had to endure so many hours in a stone church or in an open cloister entirely unprovided with artificial means of warming. Beer was the general, and wine a rarer beverage. Relishes and extra dishes were granted from time to time, as, for instance, on festival occasions, or as a reward for special duties. To guard against chills furs were largely worn, and were indeed a heavy item of expenditure. Spices were largely used as comforts in the same way as the mustard already referred to, and to keep the monks in health the gardener was required to supply each monk with a regulation number of apples daily from Advent to Lent, doubtless, again, a wise provision at a period when vegetables were

CLOISTERS AND FROMOND'S CHANTRY, WINCHESTER COLLEGE

"But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale."

Cloisters, with Fromond's Chantry in the centre (for College has two chapels), forms one of the most poetic spots of Winchester College.

In earlier days school was held in Cloisters during the summer months. In Cloisters the College dead lie buried. Many former scholars have cut or carved their names on the stone-work of Cloisters, among them the famous Ken, afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells, who wrote his *Manual of Prayers* for the use of Winchester College Boys.

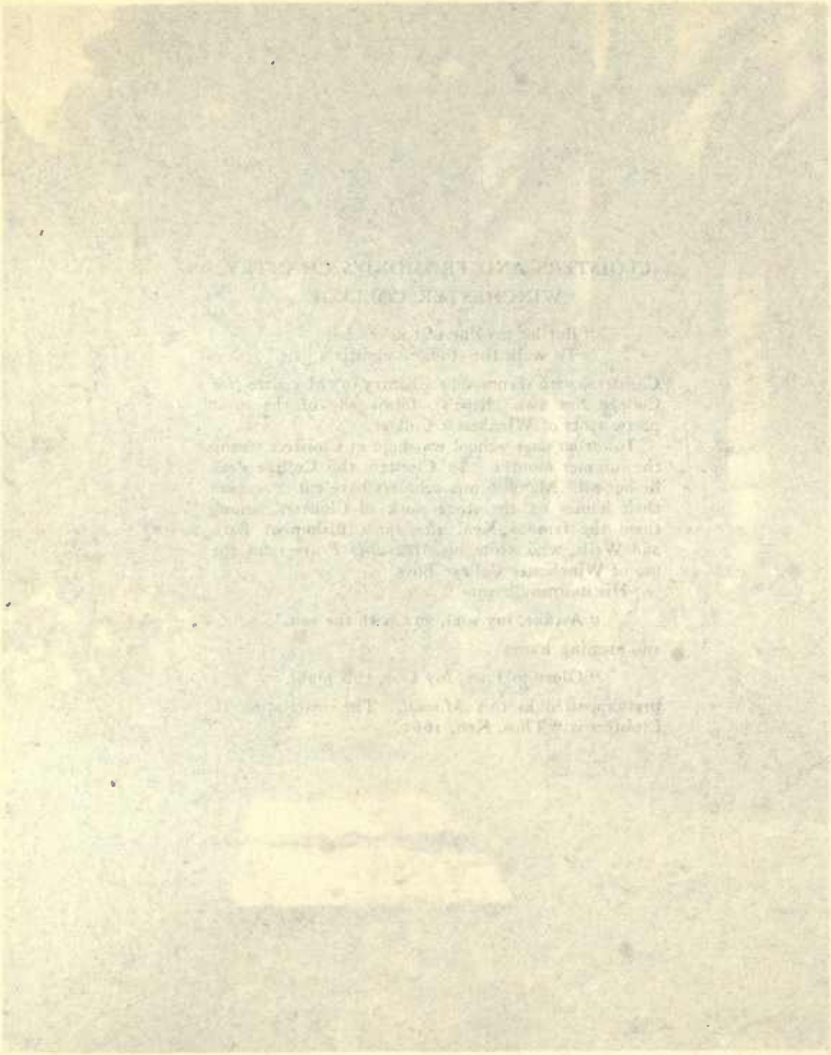
His morning hymn

"Awake, my soul, and with the sun,"

and evening hymn

"Glory to Thee, my God, this night,"

first appeared in this *Manual*. The inscription in Cloisters is "Thos. Ken, 1665."



nowhere readily obtainable as at present. As an additional corrective, blood-letting, five times a year, was an habitual practice, and as this involved three days in hospital, *i.e.* practically three days' holiday, it was rather looked forward to than otherwise. 'Shaving day' was an important event. On Maunday Thursday the monks washed each other's feet, and once a year they had a bath. The straw for the pallets, on which they slept in the 'dortour,' was changed once a year.

The meals were taken in silence in the refectory, while, to transpose the poet's words,

> The Reader droned from the Pulpit,
> Like the murmur of many bees,
> The legends of good *St. Swithun*
> And *St. Benet's* homilies.

Straw litter covered the floor, which was changed seven times a year—a higher standard of cleanliness and luxury than prevailed generally, seeing that Erasmus, 200 years later, could still complain of the filthy rush-covered floors of English houses, where bones, scraps, and ale from the table accumulated, with even less desirable kinds of dirt, and which, when it was replaced, was removed so perfunctorily that the lower layers remained undisturbed, it might be for years.

The Obedientiary Rolls, moreover, supply us with an interesting insight into the commodities in general use, and also into their prices. Reducing to modern values we find an egg and a herring practically cost then, as now, a penny apiece. Sugar existed in various

forms—Sugar Scaffatyn, Sugar of Cyprus, Sugar Roset, and sweetmeats or comfits of various kinds, varying from one to several shillings a pound. Rice was largely consumed, and cost threepence a pound. 'Coryns,' *i.e. grapes of Corinth*, in other words currants, about two shillings a pound. Enormous quantities of groceries, 'spiceries' as they were termed, figured in the accounts, but, doubtless, largely because St. Swithun had his stall at St. Giles's Fair, and dealt extensively in 'spices.'

It was at Fair time that the monks had their chief holiday, and made their chief purchases. It was at the Fair that they purchased also the furs they wore so largely. On the top of the hill the Prior had his special pavilion, and kept practically open house—and doubtless the monks keenly appreciated the rare opportunity the Fair afforded for a little excursion beyond the walls. For though the Prior mingled freely with the outer world, as a great political personage was summoned regularly to Parliament, and so forth, the monk in general but rarely left the convent gate, and saw little beyond 'the studious cloister's pale.'

We have fewer details of the Abbey of Hyde, just as we have fewer remains of its fabric. Such part as remains, apart from some unimportant ruins, is generally supposed to have formed part of the Tithe barn. Opposite the gateway of this—which is really an interesting piece of architectural work, unfortunately very meagre in extent,—is the Church of St. Bartholomew, Hyde, where, as already stated, the lay servants of the abbey worshipped. The squared and worked stones

which are to be seen freely in the houses all round the neighbourhood are, otherwise, practically all that still remains of the great abbey.

Of its internal life we know also but little ; the *Liber de Hyda* preserves most of its history, but we have no obedientiary rolls to chronicle its small beer. During much of its later history it had a hard struggle for existence. The Black Death all but brought ruin to it, though later on William of Wykeham did much to restore its prosperity. Its best-known abbot was Walter Fyfhyde, abbot from 1318 to 1361.

Of St. Mary's Abbey we have fewer details still. It enjoyed a considerable revenue from the tolls, or 'octroi,' on merchandise which entered the city at the East Gate.

Far different from the life of monk or nun was that of the friar. In the fourteenth century he was firmly established as a Winchester institution. He was the active missioner, the revivalist, the preacher. He moved in the world, not in the cloister. He taught, he preached, he visited the slums ; he was the Church-army worker or the Salvationist of his time, and if he wrought too much on the superstitious fears of his hearers, even if the relics which he permitted them to kiss were usually nothing but 'pigges bones,' like those of Chaucer's 'gentle pardonere,' as often as not he would have been prepared to defend the fraud as a pious deception which did no harm to his listeners, while as a class the friars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were undoubtedly the salt of the earth.

All the four orders of friars were represented in Winchester—Black Friars or Dominicans, Grey Friars or Franciscans, White Friars or Carmelites, and Austin Friars. Their quarters were generally in the slums. The name 'Grey Friars' still lingers in 'The Brooks,' and 'The Friary' in Southgate Road preserves the memory of the Austin Friars, though the latter, strictly speaking, were rather canons than friars proper. Between the several types of ecclesiastics deadly jealousy existed, and if monk and friar agreed at all, it was probably in a common hostility to the ordinary parochial incumbent or parish priest.

Besides these, many smaller religious or semi-religious houses of various types existed. Adjoining Wykeham's College was the 'Sustern Spital,' a community of nursing sisters, fronting on to College Street; the little college of St. Elizabeth of Hungary stood near the boundary wall of 'Meads'; and besides these were a number of others, of which Magdalene College was perhaps the chief. Mediaeval Winchester could certainly display 'Pious Founders' with any city of its day.

The monasteries continued to flourish in greater or less prosperity till the middle of Henry VIII.'s reign. But though the cloister monk himself might come but little in contact with the outer world, the aspects in which the monastery as a whole did so were numerous and important. Not only in its immediate vicinity did it serve as educator, general almoner, and physician, relieving want and sheltering distress, but far away

also from its walls its word was law, its control all-sufficient. As landed proprietors on a widely extended scale the monasteries wielded enormous territorial influence. At their grange farms, such as the farm of the Augustinians at Silkstede, they maintained large bodies of farm hands, they reared sheep, they drove to market, they bought and sold. Nor was this all; all was fish that came into their net, and Church patronage not the least important or acceptable, so that more and more the duty of providing for the spiritual needs of neighbouring or outlying parishes fell to their share, along with the tithes or dues paid to support it, and in such cases tithe was no longer paid to the incumbent direct but to the monastery, who appointed a 'vicar' or deputy to carry out the spiritual duties,—a system satisfactory enough, perhaps, if faithfully followed out, but leading to every form of evil and neglect when laxity supervened, and selfishness replaced zeal; and so the system of 'vicars' as incumbents was inaugurated, while the frequent iteration and survival up and down the country side of such monastic addenda to the names of Hampshire towns and villages, as Itchen Abbas, Abbot's Ann, Monk's Sherborne, Prior's Barton, to quote but one or two, is an eloquent testimony to the firm grasp which the monk had secured of the spiritual patrimony of the Church, and to this more than anything else is to be attributed the present poverty of the Church, and the lay patronage existing in so many rural English parishes to-day.

The closing scene in the monastic story was not, however, to be reached for some century or so longer. In Henry VIII.'s time, however, monasteries had drifted so hopelessly from the general stream of national life, that it was evident their existence could not be indefinitely prolonged on existing lines, and Wolsey, with an insight and high zeal for reform which is rarely done sufficient justice to, conceived the plan of closing them and diverting the funds thus set free to other religious and kindred purposes, the endowment of schools, colleges, etc. Henry VIII. availed himself of Wolsey's suggestion, and Thomas Cromwell, the supple and unscrupulous instrument of an equally unscrupulous master, carried it out,—not, however, with any view of a right-minded diversion of funds set aside for religious purposes, but with the intention, barely veiled, of selfish misappropriation, and the satisfaction of personal greed, and in the general scramble for plunder, not only did the monastic property, as such, get swallowed up, but the parochial endowments—where vicars were in being, at least—were swallowed up also.

The actual closing was carried out by two commissions. In 1536 some of the smaller Winchester houses were suppressed, including the Sustern Spital and the various friaries. Then in 1537 a second commission was appointed, and the larger houses began to fall. At Hyde, Abbot Salcot proved 'conformable' and surrendered the abbey, and in 1538 Cromwell's commissioners, with the notorious Thomas Wriothesley,

afterwards Earl of Southampton, acting the part of 'leading villain' of the piece, visited it to carry out the work of demolishment. In a letter to Cromwell they thus describe their work at Hyde :—

> About three o'clock (*A.M.*) we made an end of the shrine here at Wynchester. . . . We think the silver thereof will amount to near two thousand marks. Going to our beds-ward, we viewed the altar, which we purpose to bring with us. Such a piece of work it is that we think we shall not rid it, doing our best, before Monday next or Tuesday morning, which done we intend, both at Hyde and at St. Mary's, to sweep away all the rotten bones that be called relics, which we may not omit lest it be thought that we came more for the treasure than for avoiding the abominations of idolatry.

The words are significant, and the hour 3 A.M. tells its own tale. The abbot and other inmates received pensions, very modest ones, and the manors fell into various lay hands. Wriothesley secured the lion's share. The abbey buildings were sold for the material they were built of, and so rapidly did most of it disappear, that Leland in 1539 says in his well-known *Itinerary*: "In this suburb stood the great abbey of Hyde, and hath yet a parish church." Camden, writing shortly after, speaks of the "bare site, deformed with heaps of ruins, daily dug up to burn into lime." In 1788 what still remained of the ruins was nearly all rooted up to make a County Bridewell. No thought of Alfred, or the other mighty and illustrious dead buried within the precincts, seems to have stayed the Vandal hands; numerous relics, patens, chalices, rings

were found. A slab of stone bearing Alfred's name was taken away, and is still preserved at Corby, in Cumberland. It was not part of Alfred's tomb, as it bears the date 891. So far all attempts to locate the position of Alfred's tomb have been unsuccessful. Like Moses of old, "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

The suppression of St. Swithun's had results less drastic. Hyde Abbey was simply swallowed up in the catastrophe. St. Swithun's was transformed into the capitular body of the Cathedral, the Prior, Sub-prior, and monks disappeared, and in their places succeeded the Dean, the Chapter, and Canons of Winchester.

The new establishment thus formed was at first composed of the Dean, twelve prebendaries, and six minor canons. The Prior, William Kingsmill, proved 'very conformable,' and became the first Dean of the new collegiate body. The commissioners, here as at Hyde, stripped the Cathedral of its ornaments. The silver shrine of St. Swithun disappeared, and various other shrines, and the glorious treasures of gold and silver, and precious stones, the gifts of Cnut, Bishop Stigand, and many another pious donor, which had graced the high altar, were all swept away by the greedy hands of the spoilers.

The domestic buildings have almost all now disappeared. The chapter-house was pulled down in 1570 by Bishop Horne, largely for the sake of the leaden roof; and the cloisters later on suffered a similar fate. Part of one of the convent kitchens remains in one of

MEMORIAL GATEWAY, WINCHESTER COLLEGE

The Memorial Gateway, opening on to Kingsgate Street, was erected recently in memory of Wykehamists who fell in the South African War.

Memorial Gateway
Winchester College

the houses at the west side of the cloister garth, and some portions of the domestic buildings still remain in the Deanery, but practically all connected with the domestic life of the monastery has now disappeared. In 1632 Bishop Curle opened a passage, now called 'The Slype,' by cutting through the great buttress on the south side, and so converted the cloister garth into a thoroughfare. Two curious Latin anagrams cut on the west front of the Cathedral and on the wall adjoining commemorate this. But the Priory, thus transformed, gained rather than lost in usefulness. Much of the property was indeed seized by the king, but the Dean and Chapter have remained otherwise in full possession of the powers and privileges granted to them, while the fuller and less restricted range of activity has rendered the Cathedral the centre of ecclesiastical life and of extended usefulness, far exceeding what the Priory in its later days ever succeeded or perhaps ever aimed at securing.

The suppression of St. Swithun's was the first in point of time ; later on, in 1538, Hyde was dissolved ; in 1539, St. Mary's Abbey—Nunna Mynstre—founded by Alswitha, Queen of Alfred the Great, suffered a like doom. St. Elizabeth's College lasted a few years longer, and was finally sold to Winchester College in 1547, and the buildings pulled down. The college luckily survived the visitation, so, also, equally fortunately, did St. Cross and St. John's Hospital, and these remain in continued and more extended usefulness till the present day.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CATHEDRAL

Sermons in Stones.

To deal adequately with Winchester Cathedral would be almost to write the history of England, a task manifestly impossible within the limits of such a work as this. For the Cathedral is not merely a building, but a veritable history in stone, and that not a history—as historic buildings very often are—of a community which has raised but a small eddy in the waters of national life, but of one which has profoundly affected the fortunes of the nation during almost every period of its existence. It is safe to say that scarcely a single storm of national strife has burst upon the land without leaving in some way an impress upon these grey stone walls, and during a period of many centuries there was scarcely one single actor of eminence in the national drama who did not leave, in some form or other, a record imperishably graven here behind him. Not only have these stones witnessed the coronations of kings—the baptisms, marriages, and burials of princes—the consecration of

bishops, and many another ceremony of high national significance, but they enshrine within their circuit the sacred dust of generations of the great departed, subject and king, soldier and priest, statesman and prelate; they are a great national Valhalla with which no other in the land save Westminster Abbey can claim to compare. As the preceding pages have shown, a Christian cathedral has existed continuously on the present site since the days of Kynegils and Kenwalh, in the 7th century. Bishop Swithun and Bishop Æthelwold successively added to or rebuilt large portions of the fabric, but the only Saxon work now remaining is in the crypt and foundations. The pillars and arches are splendidly massive and curiously fashioned, and show that Æthelwold's work was solidly constructed. The Cathedral, as we see it to-day, is the Norman and Angevin Cathedral—the cathedral of Walkelyn and of Godfrey de Lucy, transformed in later Plantagenet days by Edyngton, Wykeham, and Beaufort, and adorned by Silkstede, Fox, and many others. Walkelyn's Cathedral was a typical Norman building, and the disposition of its parts reflected a symbolism as well as a harmony. The central truths of Christian doctrine, those of the Trinity and of the redemption, were beautifully symbolised in the three-fold repetition of nave, triforium, and clerestory in the elevation, and of nave, choir, and transepts disposed in the form of a cross in the ground plan. The arches and pillars are characteristic examples of the Norman style—semicircular arches springing from heavy,

cushion-shaped capitals surmounting the strong circular pillars. The general effect of the interior, though heavy, was one of impressiveness and dignity, as can be well seen from the transepts, which remain for all practical purposes unaltered from their original form, or better still from the interior of Chichester Cathedral of to-day. It reflected alike calmness, dignity, and strength—the dignity of a strength conscious of a burden indeed, but self-reliant and adequate to the task. It is no light burden that those giant pillars are bearing, nor do they support it joyously or even with ease: each one is rather an Atlas, bearing his load strongly and uncomplainingly, but needing to put forth all his powers in the effort.

Godfrey de Lucy, Bishop in Richard I.'s time, extended the church eastwards by adding the retro-choir with its beautiful Early English arcading, graceful columns, and lancet windows,—an extension which, owing to the insufficient foundation on which he built, is in large measure responsible for the insecure condition of the fabric to-day. This we will revert to later on in the chapter. Godfrey de Lucy's object was to afford space for the ever-increasing numbers of pilgrims who crowded to Winchester to see the shrine of St. Swithun, but who in other respects were unwelcome guests. His extension eastward afforded every facility to admit the pilgrims in to view the shrine, without giving them access to the choir, nave, or domestic parts of the Priory. In Edward III.'s reign came the trans-

formation of the nave and aisles—a daring work commenced by Bishop Edyngton, and completed by William of Wykeham, almost equal in magnitude to the reconstruction of the fabric itself. Edyngton's work may be seen in the aisle windows at the extreme west of the building; Wykeham's, which is lighter and more graceful, fills the rest of the nave. The general result has been to impart to the interior gracefulness and lightness. The columns on either side of the choir steps, which were left partly unaltered, show us in some measure how the change was effected, partly by pulling down and rebuilding, partly by cutting away from the face of the columns. The triforium was removed bodily, and the triple row of Norman arches thrown together into a single range of light, lofty, and graceful Perpendicular-Gothic arches, surmounted by smaller Perpendicular windows serving as clerestory. Triforium proper no longer exists, but its place is taken by a continuous narrow balcony running along both sides of the nave. The impressiveness and beauty of the effect thus produced it is impossible to describe. As you enter at the west end the majesty of the whole at once silences and uplifts you—a forest almost of lofty shafts and pillars rising unbroken and towering overhead, where they branch out and interlace in the beautiful intricacy of the fan-tracery of the roof.

It is not without appropriateness that Wykeham and Edyngton both lie buried here in the beautiful chantry chapels which they respectively erected between the pillars on the south side of the nave.

The work of transformation from Norman to Perpendicular was continued through the choir and presbytery aisles by Beaufort and others, and later bishops extended the building eastward beyond the limits of Godfrey de Lucy's work. The three chapels at the east end, Orleton's Chapel, commonly spoken of as the Chapel of the Guardian Angels, Langton's Chapel, and the Lady Chapel, contain much interesting and varied work.

In one sense the retro-choir is, architecturally speaking, the most interesting part of the Cathedral. It presents wonderful variety, and contains specimens of practically every stage of architectural development since de Lucy's day. But it must be confessed that the general effect is rather a confused medley of seemingly haphazard or tentative reconstructions, and the piecemeal character of the separate parts deprives it to a large extent of the dignity and completeness of a harmonious whole. Nowhere is this exemplified better than in the three east windows of the south transept — all altered from the original Norman windows, and each entirely different in character from its neighbours. Yet this very want of harmony is strangely eloquent. Winchester Cathedral, and its east end more particularly, is not an architect's cathedral, so to speak—one complete harmonious design like Salisbury ; rather is it a document in stone—a deed to which many participants have affixed their sign-manual, each in his characteristic writing, and bearing the direct impress of his personality.

Yet fascinating as its architectural features are, they are dwarfed and unimportant beside the wealth of historical association that lies locked up within these walls as in a treasure-chest.

Of the many great and solemn ceremonials which these walls have witnessed—such indeed, to mention one or two only, as the second coronation of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, the baptism of Henry VII.'s son, Arthur of Winchester, Prince of Wales, the marriage of Henry IV. with his second wife Joan of Navarre, and that of Mary Tudor, Queen of England, to Philip of Spain—we will not now speak in detail. Rather will we concentrate our attention on the historic and architectural monuments which meet our eye almost wherever we turn, and among this wealth of historical and architectural treasures three may be singled out for special notice—the chantry chapels, the reredos, and the mortuary chests. The chantry chapels are gems of beauty and of interest, enshrining the mortal remains as well as the memories of six notable men,—Edyngton, Wykeham, Beaufort, Waynflete, Fox, and Gardiner. Wykeham's chantry is almost daringly constructed out of and between two of the great pillars of the nave. The memories of the three chantry monks who served it in Wykeham's lifetime are preserved by three charming miniature figures placed in effigy at Wykeham's feet. The chantries of Beaufort, Waynflete, Fox, and Gardiner are east of the choir. Beaufort's chantry, less beautiful perhaps architecturally, is wonderfully suggestive. How eloquently the recumbent effigy

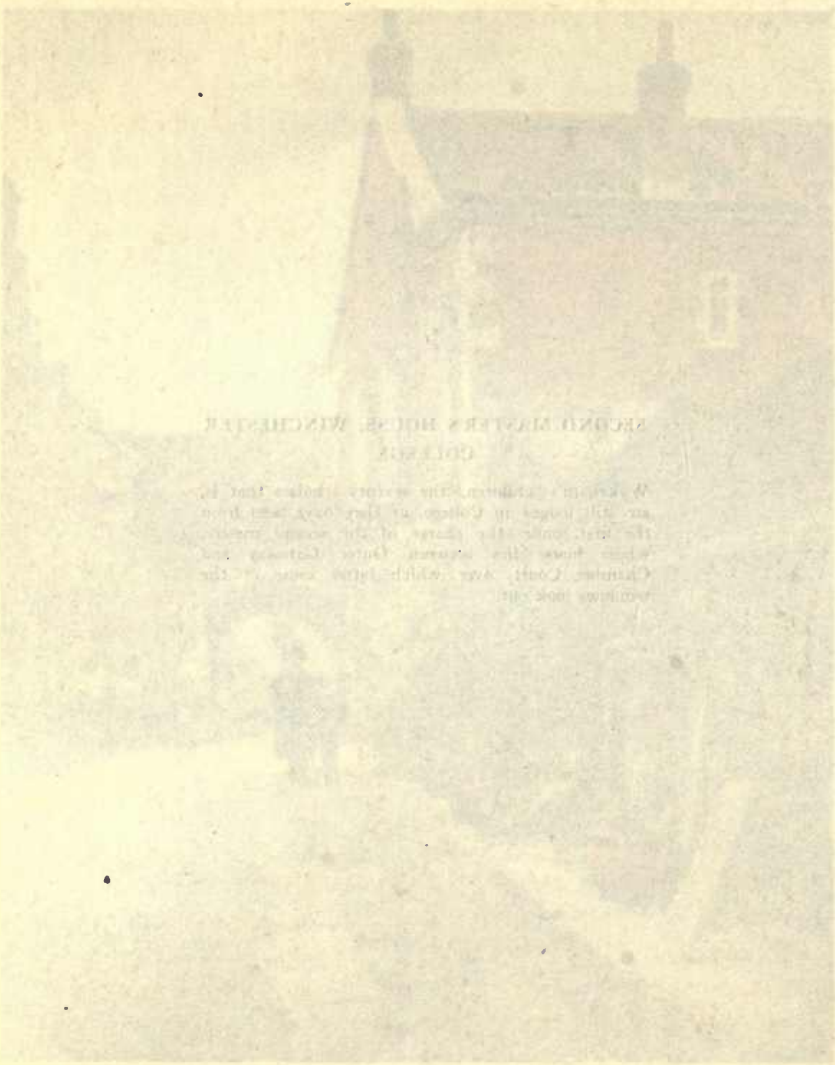
seems to recall the strong features of the man who desired power so earnestly, and could dare greatly in the effort to possess it—those rigid hands now clasped meekly in prayer betoken a humility and repose which their owner when in life probably never enjoyed, nor it may be even desired. Waynflete, again, had a notable career. Headmaster of Winchester, he was chosen by Henry VI. as first headmaster of his new foundation of Eton, and shortly after from headmaster became Provost, from which position he rose to become Bishop of Winchester. Waynflete founded Magdalen College, Oxford; and Magdalen College has but recently been discharging a pious duty by undertaking the work needed for the preservation of her founder's chantry. With Waynflete, Wykeham, and Foxe (founder of Corpus), all buried in these chantries, Winchester might almost claim to have founded Oxford herself. Architecturally each chantry marks a step forward in the development of style, and registers the successive stages in the rise, culmination, decline, and death of Perpendicular Gothic.

Of the great altar-screen we have already spoken. Here we have Perpendicular Gothic at its very best, rich in effort, yet in perfect taste, without the least suggestion of the florid or the bizarre—the detail so varied, the execution so delicate. The statuary is modern, but is beautifully executed and in perfect keeping—a somewhat unusual excellence—with the original work. It would be hard to meet with so illustrative and remarkable a series of Christian saints and examples as are here shown in effigy grouped

Mr. Randall's House
Winchester College

SECOND MASTER'S HOUSE, WINCHESTER COLLEGE

Wykeham's 'children,' the seventy scholars that is, are still lodged in College, as they have been from the first, under the charge of the second master, whose house lies between Outer Gateway and Chamber Court, over which latter some of the windows look out.



round the Saviour's figure—the four archangels, the Virgin and St. John, St. Paul and St. Peter, doctors like Jerome, teachers like Ambrose, Christian missionaries like Birinus, bishops like Swithun, Æthelwold, Wykeham, and Wolsey. Among sovereigns we have Egbert, Alfred, Cnut, and Queen Victoria. Among the others of note are Earl Godwine, Izaak Walton, Ken and Keble. Many of these lie actually buried within the Cathedral walls, and nearly all left their mark inseparably and honourably stamped, alike on the national, as on the city history.

Of all the historical memorials, however, none is capable of so profoundly stirring the imagination or arresting the attention as the six beautiful mortuary chests placed above the side screens of the choir. Think what associations the inscriptions on these recall. Early Wessex chieftains, as Kynegils and Kenwalh: kings of Wessex, when Wessex was supreme over all England, as Egbert and Æthelwulf: the union of Saxon and Dane, as personified by Cnut and Queen Emma; the Norman tyrant as represented by Rufus. Not even in Westminster Abbey itself can names such as these be read. And close at hand are other significant names too: Harthacnut: Richard, son of the Conqueror, fated, like his brother Rufus, to meet a violent death in the New Forest, but otherwise unknown to history: Duke Beorn, murdered at sea by Sweyn, son of Earl Godwine. These and other striking names can be found graven on the stone-work which carries the mortuary chests above.

Of former bishops of Winchester the majority are buried here. Some of these—and among them some of the most famous—have no visible sign to mark their tomb; these include such names as Birinus, Swithun, Æthelwold, Walkelyn, Henry of Blois. There are many others too over whom we should like to linger: Peter de Rupibus, for instance, the evil genius of Henry III.'s reign, and Ethelmar or Aymer, the absentee bishop, who died in Paris, but desired his heart to be placed in a casket for interment in the Cathedral, though when alive his affections seem to have been centred anywhere but here. His monument is more picturesque than his life was edifying. He is represented in effigy in the attitude of prayer, and holding his heart between his folded hands. In striking contrast to these are monuments to Bishops Morley, Hoadley, Samuel Wilberforce, and Harold Brown.

Over the remaining monuments, and there are many of very great interest, we cannot linger. Flaxman is represented by a bas-relief of Dr. Warton, famous in his day as headmaster of the College, seated in his magisterial chair, with a group of college boys 'up to books.' The details of schoolboy attire are curious and interesting. Appealing to a wider circle are two flat slabs of stone, one in Prior Silkstede's Chapel, one in the north aisle. The former bears the name Izaak Walton, the latter Jane Austen. Truly Winchester Cathedral is a city of the mighty dead.

In addition to the monuments there are many other features of great attractiveness. Prior Silkstede's carved

wooden pulpit, the quaint old font curiously carved in black stone, said to have been brought to Winchester by Henry of Blois, and the *miserere* seats in the choir stalls are among these. The Cathedral library, too, is of rare interest. The wonderful Illuminated Vulgate, with its almost romantic history, and numerous early Saxon charters are preserved here, along with Cathedral and city records of great historical value.

The exterior of the Cathedral presents less interest. It is grand and striking, but hardly beautiful. The West front is flat and featureless, the long straight roof of the nave is monotonous. The east end, with its varied work and the huge Norman transepts, is by far the finest portion. Taken as a whole the general effect is extremely dignified and impressive, and the surroundings are entirely in keeping.

As you pass down the beautiful lime avenue, or cross the grass to the west and north, the quiet dignity and repose impress you with an influence deeper than mere beauty, and the Cathedral Close, with its Jacobean and Georgian houses, is equally serene, dignified, and attractive. The Deanery is interesting, particularly the Early English work in the portico, and the beautiful green sward in Mirabel Close, with the Pilgrims' Hall to the east, and Cheyne Court with its open-timbered and gabled houses, all both alike quiet, stately, and harmonious. A rare place this Close, with associations too of its own. Even nowadays it possesses its ghost —a female figure robed and veiled like a nun—which persons still living will describe to you, for they have

seen it themselves, they declare, and heard its ghostly footfall echoing as it has paced before them on the flags. Nor is the word 'Close' a word only. Still every night the gate is religiously locked at the stroke of ten, after which none may enter or depart save by favour of the Close porter, the lineal successor of the 'proud portér' so prominent in Early English ballad poetry.

Before leaving the Cathedral we must say a few words about the operations for the repair of the fabric to which reference has already been made.

The insecurity of a large part of the fabric is due mainly to the foundation on which Godfrey de Lucy built when he extended the Cathedral towards the east. To do this he had to build out over an area of peaty and water-logged land, wherein to reach a solid foundation it was necessary to go down through successive layers of marl and gravel and peat, to a considerable depth, varying from 16 to 24 feet. As this involved working under water, and as the task of dealing with water under foundations was beyond the skill of builders of the time, de Lucy made an artificial foundation of beech logs, or beech trunks rather, laid horizontally one over the other and kept in place with piles, with the result that a progressive subsidence has occurred, mainly, but not entirely, at the east end, causing walls to bulge and crack, and fissures to appear, until the present degree of insecurity has been reached. Thus it has been not a question of restoration, but of preservation, and the work has been taken in hand not a moment too soon.

The present operations have consisted, in the main, of systematic underpinning of the walls and buttresses, and as much of the work has had to be carried out under 10 feet or so of water, a diver has been employed to lay down concrete in section after section at the base of the new foundations, the water being afterwards temporarily drawn off by the help of powerful pumps, to enable the work of underpinning to go on. The employment of divers to lay foundations for a building 800 years old would appear a fantastic absurdity, transcending the wildest stretch of imaginative invention. Winchester Cathedral has actually realised it.

Unfortunately, the securing of the southern aisle of the nave may demand an addition,—not merely underpinning, but the construction of buttresses. But these, although novel, will be no more foreign to the general design than were the corresponding buttresses which Wykeham added to the north aisle ; and these, with the further addition of the great tie-rods inserted at various spots in the transepts and retro-choir, will, it is hoped, give the Cathedral a stability which will ensure its preservation for centuries more. The operations, so novel in character, so daring in conception, so extensive in scale, are yet unfinished, and while some £90,000 has been already expended on the work, something like another £12,000 is still needed for its completion.

CHAPTER XVII

THE COLLEGE

Schoolmasters in any schoole
Writing with pen and ink.
CHILDE MAURICE.

"MANNERS makyth man"—'manners' in the old and wide sense of the word, the equivalent of the Latin 'mores,' or of the word 'conversation' in St. Paul's epistles, *i.e.* moral worth and character as contrasted with wealth, or the symbols of rank and power. This is the motto inseparably connected with Wykeham's foundations at Winchester and Oxford alike, and who shall say how potent this motto has been in inspiring and moulding the character of English manhood and English public schools during the five centuries and more since their great founder was laid to rest?

Winchester College is no common place. If Winchester Cathedral, which enshrines the bones of Egbert, should be the Mecca of all pious lovers of the Empire, Winchester College should be the Mecca for all English public school men. Not that Wykeham was the first to found an English public school, whatever

exactly the term 'public school' may mean. Schools had existed in the land for six or seven hundred years before Wykeham's day. There were schools in Winchester itself, as, for instance, the ancient Winchester Grammar School, seven of the poor scholars of which received a meal daily in the Hundred Mennes Hall at St. Cross. Wykeham did not invent schools as public schools, but what he did was to give to public schools the special impetus and character which they have borne ever since, and in this sense he is rightly named and revered as the 'Father of English public schools.'

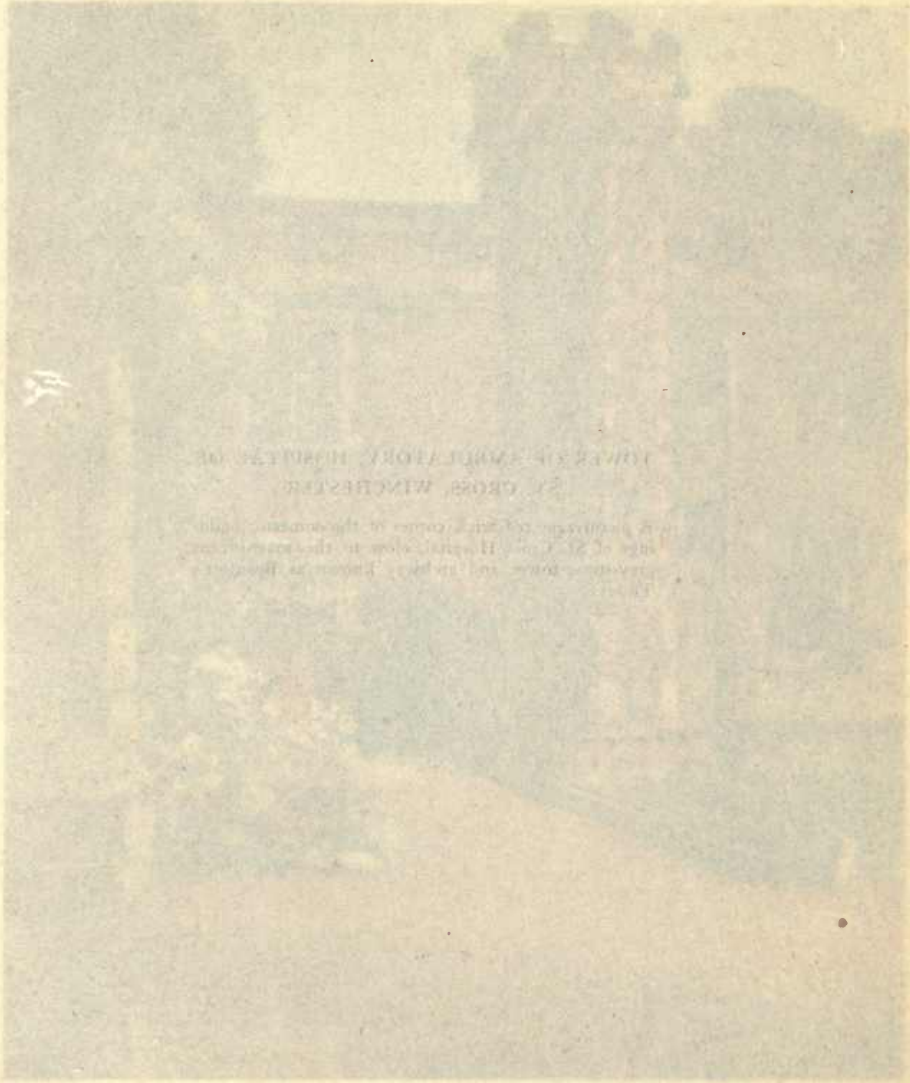
Earlier schools had almost invariably been linked to collegiate churches — the communities of secular canons—and had occupied always a subordinate position. Wykeham gave an independent position to his school, strengthening it indeed by making it part of a collegiate body, and linking it with the University, through the sister foundation of New College—St. Marie College of Wynchester in Oxford, to give it its full name—which Wykeham had completed in 1386.

Before the college could be commenced many preliminaries were necessary,—bulls from the Pope, and other official sanctions, lawsuits and agreements with all kinds of bodies which had an interest in the site ; but Wykeham began to organise his school before the permanent buildings were ready, and for some years his scholars were lodged in temporary quarters somewhere by St. Giles's Hill. The site chosen for the buildings was just outside the city walls to the south,

and when at last all was ready, on March 20, 1394, the opening ceremony was solemnized. The aged bishop received the Warden and seventy scholars in the presence chamber of his Episcopal palace of Wolvesey, and the whole body left Wolvesey in solemn procession, and entered and took possession of their new abode.

Wykeham's immediate purpose in founding a school appears to have been to help to provide a body of educated clergy. Successive visitations of the 'Black Death' had depleted the land of clergy, just as it had of labourers, and there was pressing need for a supply of educated men to recruit their ranks. It was to be part of the object of the college to provide such recruits.

The scheme of the college and the statutes of the founders were carefully thought out and elaborated. The college was part of a wide educational scheme: a school and something more—a society, with roots in Oxford as well as in Winchester. The society was to comprise a school, a chantry, and a body of Fellows. The school was to consist of seventy scholars, a number chosen very possibly in symbolical allusion to the seventy ordained to teach and preach throughout the land of Galilee, just as Dean Colet afterwards chose 'a hundred and fifty and three' as the number of his scholars in the school he founded—St. Paul's School, London. Over these were a master or *Magister informator*, and an usher or *hostiarius*: the chantry was equipped with three chaplains, three chapel clerks, and



TOWER OF AMBULATORY, HOSPITAL OF ST. CROSS, WINCHESTER

A picturesque red-brick corner of the domestic buildings of St. Cross Hospital, close to the magnificent grey-stone tower and archway known as Beaufort's Tower.

sixteen choristers : the number of Fellows or Socii was ten. The supreme head over this varied community was the Warden.

This society, complete in itself and so far independent, was linked with another—the sister foundation of New College, Oxford—in such a way as to gain stability and dignity without subordination. Winchester was to be independent of New, but the influence of New was to be a potent factor in determining the policy of Winchester. The Warden of Winchester was to be appointed by New College, and New College was also to have extensive powers of visitation.

In Wykeham's day any separation of the religious element from other aspects of education would have been deemed impossible, and everything was cast in a religious and even semi-monastic mould. Nevertheless the organisations for the school and chantry were kept quite distinct, and while divine service was celebrated practically continuously by the chantry staff, the scholars were required to attend chapel services only on Sundays, saints' days, or other festivals. The Warden and Fellows alike were to be in priests' orders. The Fellows had duties to perform connected with the chantry, but none connected with the school, except that the Warden and Fellows were to elect the headmaster. The headmaster was not necessarily to be in holy orders ; he was to teach the scholars, and to maintain discipline, and was to be assisted by the usher or *hostiarius*. The 'seventy' were to be *pauperes et indigentes*, *i.e.* poor and in need of

assistance, apt to study, and well versed in the rudiments of Latin grammar, reading, and plain-song. They were to be elected by a body of six, known afterwards as 'the Chamber,' from the room overlooking Middle or Chamber Court, 'Election Chamber,' where elections took place. The 'Chamber' was to consist of the Warden and two Fellows from New (known as the senior and junior 'posers' respectively), with the Warden, Subwarden, and Headmaster of Winchester. In election preference was to be given to founder's kin, and then to others in due degrees of priority of claim. They were to remain until the age of eighteen years, unless on the roll for New College; but founder's kin could remain till the age of twenty-five years.

The scholars were to be lodged, boarded, clothed, and taught entirely free of expense: they were not to keep dogs, ferrets, or hawks: to carry arms or frequent taverns: to empty water, etc., on the heads of their companions from windows in the court—regulations which throw a curious light on the manners of the time. The scholars were to be lodged and fed under the charge of the *hostiarius* or usher—an arrangement which obtains even now, as the 'seventy' still reside in chambers in college, under the charge of the second master.

We must not suppose that Wykeham's scholars were to be boys either destitute or in actual want. The term *pauperes et indigentes* was probably a formal expression, designed to exclude the actually

wealthy rather than anything else, like the term *in need of financial assistance* inserted in modern scholarship regulations.

In addition to the above, the statutes contemplated the admission of a limited number of outsiders, known as *commensales* or commoners, and later on town boys or *oppidani* were admitted as day boys. The conditions under which the commoners resided varied greatly from time to time. In 1727 Dr. Burton, then headmaster, made extensive additions to the College buildings, practically converting his own house into a boarding-house for them, and this building became known as 'Old Commoners.' In 1838 Commoners was rebuilt, under the name of New Commoners, but the result was not very satisfactory, and in 1860 the present plan of boarding in tutors' houses was commenced, when the Rev. H. J. Wickham opened the first 'House.' In 1869, during Dr. Moberly's tenure as headmaster, the system was extended. 'Commoners' was done away with, the commoners themselves lodged in tutors' houses, and the building in part transformed into 'Moberly Library' — so termed in memory of Dr. Moberly.

The College buildings and grounds are a charm and a delight. From the outer front in College Street, little indeed can be seen. The headmaster's house, built on the site of the old Sustern Spital, is a flat-fronted modern building faced with squared flints, and the old Brewery presents little but a blank wall of ancient

masonry. The one external feature of interest is the delightful 'Old Gateway' surmounted by a statue of the Virgin.

Passing under Old Gateway with College Brew House on the right, and then under Middle Gate into Chamber Court, one is transported back immediately into mediaevalism. There over Middle Gate is the figure of 'Sainte Marie,' and scholars, juniors, at least, if not always seniors, as they cross the quad, doff their hats still in reverence to the Virgin as they have done from the beginning. Immediately opposite you are Chapel and Hall. Chapel, with Fromond's chantry used by Lower-school 'Men,'—for Winchester is remarkable among schools as having two chapels—and the beautiful cloisters behind it, those cloisters which the Founder himself seems almost to pervade and to spiritualize with his presence, is a place to wander in and dream dreams of the past. Hall, approached, as befits its dignity, up a grand old stairway, is splendidly impressive, with its magnificent open timber roof and carved wainscot, and the Founder's portrait—a picture of real grace and beauty—dominating the high table or dais at the other end. In the lobby adjoining the kitchen they will show you the 'Trusty Servant,' the quaint old painting emblematic of loyal and devoted service. The riddle is explained in a copy of verses attached, and the absence of any reference to expectation of reward on behalf of the 'Trusty Sweater' is at least as suggestive as his loyalty and humble demeanour.

The College

Most appealing, perhaps, after Hall, possibly more even than Cloisters, is 'Seventh Chamber,' Wykeham's original schoolroom, or part of it at least, now used as a common study for senior College men, and a veritable museum of interesting reminders of old Wykehamical life mingled confusedly with aggressively incongruous and more modern 'intrusive deposits,'—here perhaps a framed 'Vanity Fair' cartoon of the headmaster; there possibly a couple of Teddy Bears serving as mascots—for in college life the points of contrast between ancient and modern are curious and startling, while not the least alluring of its characteristic features is the rich flavour and vigour of college nomenclature. 'Moab,' the boys' washing-place in earlier and less luxurious days—"Moab is my washpot"—is a delicious example of this. College phraseology is a subject almost worthy of separate treatment by itself.

'Seventh Chamber Passage,' itself originally part of Seventh Chamber, leads you to 'School,' the seventeenth-century schoolroom built by Warden Nicholas. Here you may see the 'thrones' or official seats in earlier days of headmaster and usher, and the world-famous Winchester emblem on the walls—

Aut disce
Aut discede
Manet tertia sors—caedi.

which may be freely rendered—

Learn, or depart, or stay and be beaten;

though it is more than doubtful whether, in the experience of earlier Wykehamists at least, the first and the last-mentioned fates were at all often found to be mutually exclusive.

Beyond is 'Meads,' where 'Domum' is yearly held, and beyond, again, 'New Meads,' with its magnificent sward, its lofty trees, and its memories of 'Eton Match'; and right away again, across the river, 'Hills' lies in full view—St. Catherine's Hill, where Winchester boys in earlier days repaired for recreation on 'remedies' or holidays, the joys of which may be followed out in full in Bompas's delightful life of Frank Buckland.

"Manners makyth man"—one is tempted to wonder if more may not here be meant than meets the ear, and whether 'manners,' in its Latin equivalent *mores* at least, does not wrap up a punning allusion, after the method so dear to that age, to Warden Morys, to whose hands, on the erection of the building, Wykeham first committed the future of his great college. But be that as it may, the emblem seems to sum up the spirit of the college with literal fidelity. Passing through its chambers, its chapel, its courts, its cloisters, one is sadly tempted to linger to recall the memory of this great headmaster, or recount the quaint stories told of this famous warden or that, and the names of Ken, Arnold, Goddard, Gabell, Huntingford, Barter, rise almost instinctively to one's lips. We shall find their memories all piously preserved and commemorated whether in portrait, tablet, or building, as for instance

the Memorial Gateway erected as a memorial of the old Wykehamists who fell in the South African War; but here we may not stop, and those who wish to do so can follow out their story in Leach's *Winchester College* or Adams's delightful *Wykehamica*. But more striking than the past, the noble traditions nobly preserved is the vitality in the present. 'Sainte Marie College' has always known how to adapt herself successfully, as age succeeded age, to the requirements of the day, and has paid the truest respect to the Founder's wishes in never allowing herself to grow old. There is no frost, mingled with the kindliness of age, in Winchester College.

CHAPTER XVIII

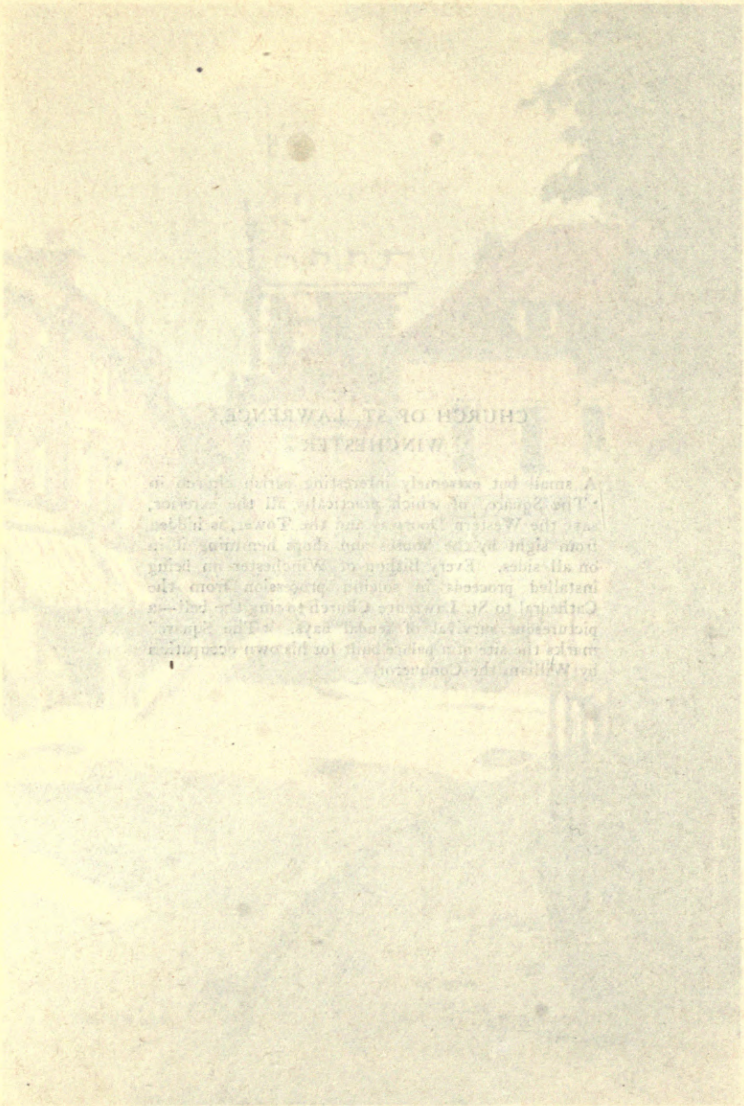
WOLVESEY—ST. CROSS—THE CASTLE HALL—THE ROUND TABLE

> And for great Arthur's seat ould Winchester preferres,
> Whose ould Round Table yet she vaunteth to be hers.
>
> DRAYTON'S *Polyolbion*.

FROM College one turns naturally to Wolvesey—Wolvesey with its wonderful grey stone walls, its memories of Saxon and Norman, Plantagenet and Stuart times. Here Alfred kept his Court, with all the learned men of his time around him; here the *English Chronicle* was first compiled; and here, above that very Wolvesey wall, it may be, the Danish pirates captured in the Solent were hanged—as has been already related—in retributive justice. But the big blocks of ruin in Wolvesey Mead are of later date; they recall to us the career of that notable figure among the Bishops of Winchester, Henry of Blois, King Stephen's brother, bishop from 1129 to 1171—the masterful man, devoted churchman, and scheming politician, whose story has been somewhat fully related in Chapter VIII. To strengthen himself he fortified

CHURCH OF ST. LAWRENCE, WINCHESTER

A small but extremely interesting parish church in 'The Square,' of which practically all the exterior, save the Western Doorway and the Tower, is hidden from sight by the houses and shops hemming it in on all sides. Every Bishop of Winchester on being installed proceeds in solemn procession from the Cathedral to St. Lawrence Church to ring the bell—a picturesque survival of feudal days. 'The Square' marks the site of a palace built for his own occupation by William the Conqueror.



his dwelling at Wolvesey with an 'adulterine' castle—for he built here without royal warrant, as he built his castles elsewhere at Bishop's Waltham and at Hursley,—and he sided alternately with Stephen and Empress Matilda in the civil war, as circumstances dictated. And so it befell that Winchester itself became divided into rival camps; Matilda's forces held the Royal Castle and the Bishop held Wolvesey, and, here within his defences, now in ruins, the Bishop stood the siege valiantly. Ultimately peace was made, and Winchester saw Prince Henry make joyful entry into her ruined streets and ratify the compact. His later years were passed in works of peace and beneficence, and for these he will always be most gratefully remembered.

He built the Hospital of St. Cross, a permanent refuge for thirteen poor brethren, and a house of daily entertainment for the poor and needy outside its walls. He placed his foundation of St. Cross under the protection of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, an Order specially devoted to guarding the welfare of pilgrims and wayfarers. And so the Brethren of St. Cross still wear to-day the eight-pointed cross of the Order and the black gown which distinguished the Knights Hospitallers, and the wayfarer's dole of bread and beer may still be asked for and obtained at its hospitable gates. Advancement, personal power, and political ascendancy, all these Bishop Henry desired for himself, strove for, won and lost in turn. St. Cross retains its vitality still,—such is the perennial virtue of unselfish kindliness and beneficence.

Though its fortifications were dismantled, Wolvesey remained the residence of the Bishops of Winchester for many centuries after Henry de Blois. Here, on March 28, 1394, in the presence chamber of Wolvesey, William of Wykeham received the warden, John Morys, and the seventy scholars of his *Newe College of St. Marie*, and gave them his blessing as they set out in solemn procession to enter into occupation of their newly erected premises. In the Civil War, after Cromwell's capture of the city, the old Bishop's Castle was finally dismantled.

Present-day Wolvesey Palace stands on your left as you enter from College Street with the Norman ruins and the old Tilt yard in front of it and on your right. Bishop Morley, the friend of Ken and Izaak Walton, erected it. But Wolvesey and Farnham together proved too heavy an episcopal burden, and later bishops have preferred to reside at Farnham. So Wolvesey ceased to be the Bishop of Winchester's official residence, and the greater part of Morley's building was pulled down by Bishop North at the end of the eighteenth century. The growing need for the division of the diocese makes it quite possible, however, that the Bishops of Winchester may again be residing in Wolvesey Palace, as their predecessors did for so many hundreds of years.

Wykeham's College, 'the Newe Saint Marie College of Wynchester,' is but a stone's-throw from Wolvesey. The story of the College has been fully dealt with in a former chapter, and so, now, as we pass along College

Street from Wolvesey, our thoughts may well turn to a house on the left adjoining College, with memories of a different kind, those of Jane Austen. A tablet over the door recalls the fact of Jane Austen's death within its walls in 1817. She had removed here from her home at Chawton, near Alton, in hope of recovery under the medical treatment which Winchester could afford her. But the hope was vain. She lies buried in the north aisle of the Cathedral nave. We know her now as among the rarest and most charming of women novelists. Of her we shall speak again in the chapter on 'Winchester in Literature.'

Some half mile or so south of College, beyond New Meads and the meadows by the river—those meadows from which the tower and pinnacles of College Chapel form so poetic a picture as they mingle with the trees around, and the Cathedral behind—lies St. Cross, a foundation which has undergone many vicissitudes and been at various times "much abused" (*see pp.* 188, 189), but which has happily now for many years past been rescued from the spoiler and restored to the full exercise of generous beneficence. Of its foundation by Henry of Blois we have already spoken, but in its associations another historic name figures, of equal prominence with Bishop Henry's—that of Beaufort, Bishop and Cardinal in Henry VI.'s reign. Beaufort was a second founder, and the domestic buildings and the fine gateway are his work. Along with the Brethren with black gown and silver cross will be seen some wearing a mulberry gown, with the Beaufort Rose as

emblem; these are Brethren of the order Beaufort founded—the Order of Noble Poverty. St. Cross is not a place to describe at all in words; its traditions, its characteristic customs, its general atmosphere belong to it and to it alone; to appreciate it it must be felt. Peaceful and dignified, with the clear transparent waters of Itchen flowing quietly by at its feet, there is no place in Winchester, or indeed anywhere else, where the sense of hallowed charm, of serenity, of contentment, and of rest seems quite so natural and so pervading as here.

Wherever else we turn in Winchester we find some treasure or other over which to linger. On the high ground forming the south-west angle of the city there is the County Hall, last surviving relic of the great royal castle, which William of Normandy first erected and which his successors added to. For some six hundred years that great keep, with its heavy battlements and frowning bastions, scowled down upon the city and overawed its burghers. Yet, grim and all but impregnable as those 'rude ribs' might seem to be, more than one assailant found means to penetrate within. Here, in 1140, Matilda the Empress, besieged by Stephen's Queen, was forced by hunger to abandon resistance, and to seek safety by stealth and stratagem in a hasty and disastrous flight—her power of effective resistance broken finally and for ever. Here, in 1645, flushed with victory from Naseby field, came Cromwell, and, after nine days of hot cannonade, compelled the surrender of the citadel—a surrender which he followed

up by ordering the castle to be 'slighted,' *i.e.* razed to the ground.

The present Castle Hall was erected by a Winchester monarch—Henry III., Henry of Winchester. Here again the sense of the historic past swells and surges round you. It is almost a revelation in history to walk round it and follow out in detail the memories of those whose history is personally connected with it, their names and arms all emblazoned in the stained glass which fills the lights on either side. Local feeling has been just recently somewhat deeply stirred by the removal within the Hall of Gilbert's well-known bronze statue of Queen Victoria, formerly placed in the Abbey grounds—a removal which has evoked a very unfortunate controversy, and as to the wisdom of which considerable cleavage of opinion exists. But whatever view be taken of this, as to the impressiveness of the great Hall, within and without, or the story it has to tell, no two opinions can be held. The grand interior with its splendid columns speaks of great assemblies within its walls; of Parliaments such as the one held here as early as 1265, within a year of the death of the great De Montfort, the 'inventor,' so to speak, of the representative assembly; of State ceremonial displays such as when Henry V. received the French ambassadors here, a few days only before the Agincourt expedition sailed—as when Henry VII. celebrated the birth of his first-born, Arthur of Winchester, Prince of Wales, and as when Henry VIII. received and fêted the great Emperor Charles V., the

Charlemagne of his day; of State Trials such as that which unjustly condemned Sir Walter Raleigh; of the Bloody Assize and the horror of the judicial murder of Dame Alicia Lisle; while the most characteristic touch perhaps of all is given by the quaint relic hanging on the western wall, the so-called King Arthur's Round Table. A curious relic indeed this latter, and an ancient one, possibly 700 years old. We shall hardly accept it, as Henry VIII. and his royal Spanish guest did, as the actual table at which King Arthur and his knights used to seat themselves, even though we may read their names—Sir Launcelot, Sir Galahallt, Sir Bedivere, Sir Kay—inscribed upon its margin. Rather does it recall to us those quaintly attractive, uncritical mediaeval days, when historical perspective was unknown, that glorious age when "Once upon a time" almost satisfied the yearnings of the historical instinct. Yet one may question whether we are really better off, because for us King Arthur's Round Table has no existence and Arthur himself is lost in the strange background of

Moving faces and of waving hands,

that weird labyrinth where history and legend, myth and romance, are so strangely and inextricably interwoven; and one turns away baffled and reluctant from many and many an old-world story, and many and many an old-world relic such as this, with the sense of something like a lost inheritance.

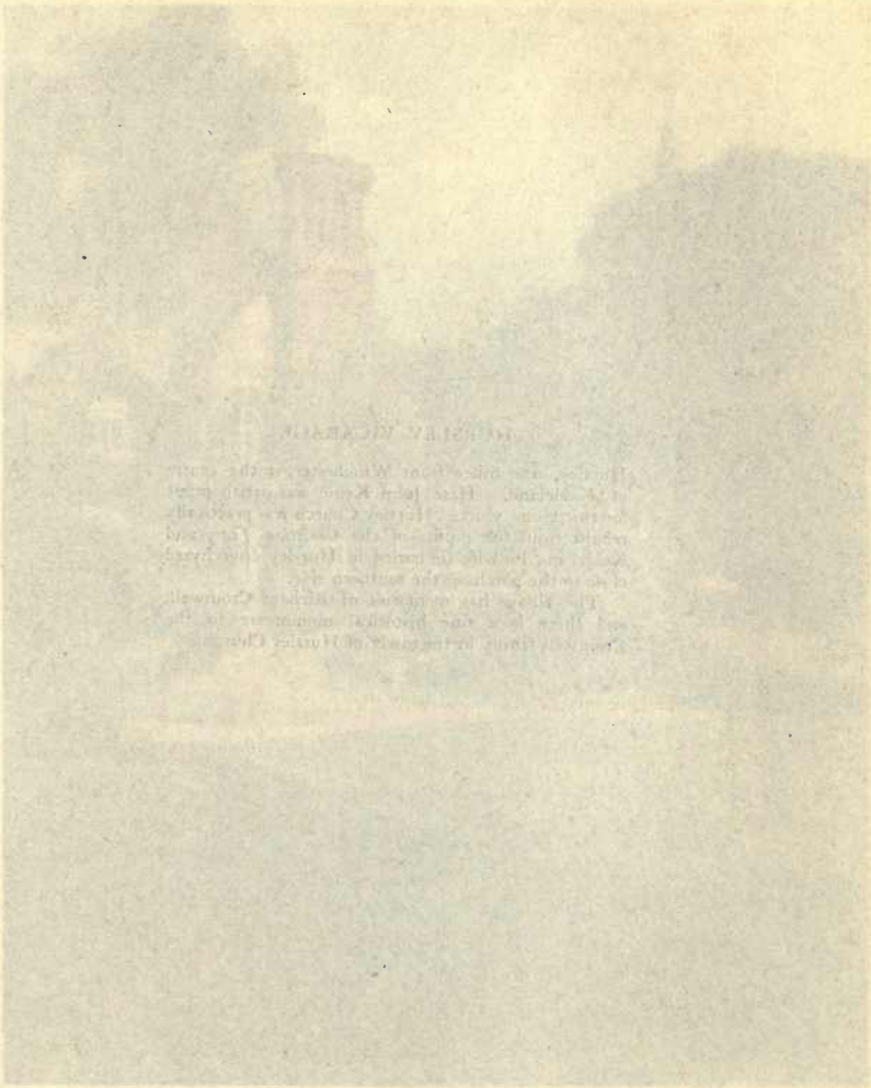
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

There is, however, little real excuse for these unavailing regrets in Winchester, for she above all places has store of real history—and such history, too—enough and to spare.

Here, for instance, in the West Gate adjoining the Castle Hall, and in the Obelisk just beyond the circuit of the old walls, this vividness of history meets us again. Formerly the West Gate was a blockhouse as much as a gate. You can still see where the portcullis worked up and down, and look down from the battlements of the roof through the machicolated openings which enabled defenders to meet assailants with molten lead and kindred compliments. Later on it was a prison. On the walls of the splendid old chamber above the gateway we can see elaborate designs carved out by one poor prisoner after another, to while away the tedium and to help him to forget the miseries of his imprisonment. Now the West Gate is a museum with a collection of rare local interest: early weights and measures of the days when Winchester could still impose its standards upon others, weapons and armour, the gibbet of the executioner, and the axe of the headsman. But strong for defence as the West Gate and city wall were, the Obelisk beyond recalls to us one foe whom no bar could exclude, no bolt restrain; for though in 1666 Winchester was straitly shut up like Jericho of old, and none went out and none came in, that grim and relentless assailant, the Plague, passed all barriers unchallenged, and Winchester became as a city of the dead. Then—for none dared approach—the country

people held their market without and chaffered for their wares at safe distance with the men upon the wall, and the Obelisk, erected in 1759, serves to commemorate the spot where marketing was done for Winchester citizens under such tragic conditions. Happily, plague has disappeared from our midst for some 250 years. In mediaeval days, right on indeed from 1348, the year of the Black Death, plague was all too common a visitant. The sister societies of Natives and Aliens still survive in Winchester, to carry on the work of relieving widows and orphans, first begun when plague laid its hand so heavily on the city in the 'Annus Mirabilis' and left so many widows and orphans to relieve.

Full of interest as the West Gate is, it leaves a sense of regret behind when we remember that it is the only one remaining of the four principal gateways which the city once possessed. The artificial and curiously warped ideas of taste and sentiment which characterised the mid-Georgian period were responsible for a wholesale destruction of Old Winchester architectural treasures. Three historic gateways, the ruins of Hyde Abbey, the tomb of Alfred the Great, Bishop Morley's Palace of Wolvesey, all these and others suffered destruction, partial or complete. The City Cross itself was condemned to removal, but popular indignation, ever ready to express itself in Winchester as vigorously, even in modern days, as it was in earlier days of Saxon and Dane, when popular clamour round the hustings was the due and only expression of law,



HURSLEY VICARAGE

Hursley, five miles from Winchester, is the centre of 'Kebleland.' Here John Keble was parish priest for thirty-one years. Hursley Church was practically rebuilt from the profits of the *Christian Year*, and Keble and his wife lie buried in Hursley churchyard close to the porch on the southern side.

The village has memories of Richard Cromwell, and there is a fine historical monument to the Cromwell family in the tower of Hursley Church.

could not be restrained, and the City Cross was left undisturbed. Nor did the West Gate escape except by accident. The great room over the gateway was at that time held as an annexe to a public-house adjoining, and so the West Gate was spared merely in order that Winchester citizens might the better enjoy their 'cakes and ale.' History teaches us to be grateful at times to strange benefactors. To many, with the present trend of social and political thought, the sentiment *Das Gasthaus als Freund* will come almost as a shock, yet here in Winchester we are confronted by the curious paradox, that while water has sapped the stability of the Cathedral, that of the West Gate has been secured by beer.

Municipal life in Winchester forms another chapter full of interest. Of her early 'gilds,' dating back perhaps to days before Alfred, of the Chepemanesela, the Chenicteshalla, the Hantachenesla, and other vaguely indicated centres of civic organisation, where, in Henry I.'s time, the citizens in their various grades assembled to 'drink their gild,' we have already spoken. Her roll of mayors claims to begin with Florence de Lunn in 1184. Whatever antiquity the Mayoralty can justly claim—for Florence de Lunn can hardly be treated quite seriously—her corporate history is full and varied.

The new Guildhall in the Broadway, some thirty years old only, which has replaced the old Guildhall in the High Street, possesses an interesting collection of civic portraits, along with corporation plate, municipal archives, and much wealth of historic raw material.

The finest of these pictures, King Charles II.'s portrait, painted by Lely, and presented by the Merry Monarch himself to the city, represents, perhaps, the only return with which the loyalty of the citizens towards the house of Stuart was rewarded. They lent King Charles I. £1000, they melted their private plate, valued at £300, and their city plate, valued at £58 more, to help to fill his empty coffers when the Civil War was raging. Old Bishop Morley, whose memories centre closest round present-day Wolvesey and Farnham, and Bishop Hoadly of the Queen Anne period, are among the more interesting of the personalities whose effigies are here displayed.

Many, indeed, are the interesting memories which Winchester preserves of the Merry Monarch and his Court ; of Nell Gwynn and of the valiant stand made against her by Prebendary Ken ; of Sir Christopher Wren and the palace he commenced to build for his royal master on the site of the castle razed by Cromwell—a great and ambitious project never completed, but which, under the name of the King's House, served for many years as the military headquarters of the city till a great fire swept it away in 1894, to make room for the present barracks, erected, soon afterwards, on very nearly the same site.

Another interesting Guildhall portrait is that of Edward Cole, Mayor in 1597, a patriotic citizen who himself subscribed £50—a large sum for one man in those days—towards the Queen's war fund in days of the Armada, and a 'gubernator' some years later of Christes Hospitall, Winchester, founded, by Peter

Symonds, in 1607 alike for the maintenance of the aged and the education of the young—a foundation possessing a delightful old Jacobean building, just beyond the Close wall, out of which has grown, almost within the last decade, on a wide and open site on the outskirts of the city, a rapidly developing school of modern type, where the 'children' of Peter Symonds, in largely increased numbers, receive a far wider education than was possible when he first called them into existence.

His will is a curious and characteristic document. It occupied an enormous number of folios. Blue Coat schoolboys, practically until the removal of the school to Horsham, showed respect to his memory by some sixty of their number attending a special Good Friday Service at the church of All Hallows, Lombard Street, at which sixpences and raisins were distributed, in accordance with his will; and his Winchester scholars and Brethren keep his memory by an annual procession to service at the Cathedral on St. Peter's Day, with a special sermon and quaint ceremonial observance.

Such are some of the matters of interest, small and great, which meet you wherever you turn in Winchester —everywhere there is some *genius loci*, some cricket installed, and chirping on the hearth. Here it is a quaint tavern-sign such as you can read on the outskirts. As you leave the city you read the legend "Last Out," as you approach from without you read "First In." Or it is a name of some street—Jewry Street, for instance, recalling the times when, as already

narrated, the Jews formed a powerful element in the commercial prosperity of the city, and had a Ghetto here—or Staple Garden, reminiscent of the great Wool Hall, where the 'Tron' or weighing-machine of the Wool Staple was kept, when Winchester was the mart where the wool trade of the south of England centred. And here and there are darker and more sombre recollections, such as the tablet outside the City Museum serves to remind us of the moving tragedy of the execution of Dame Alicia Lisle in September 1685, on a spot in the open roadway, in front of what then was the Market House. Then, too, there are glorious old houses, Tudor and mediaeval, like God Begot House and the so-called Cheesehill Old Rectory, and the delightful houses erected by Sir Christopher Wren himself—those inhabited now by Dr. England and Captain Crawford in Southgate Street for instance, and the house in St. Peter's Street erected for the Duchess of Portsmouth, of unpleasant memory. These are merely random examples of the kind of interest which Winchester presents to those who wander through her streets with eyes to see and ears to hear. For the casual visitor Winchester has much to offer; for the student of history she has more; but her wealth of treasure can only be apprehended adequately by those who are privileged to dwell within her charmed circle, for her harvest of attraction is too wide to be garnered save by those who bring extended opportunity as well as love and reverence to the task.

CHAPTER XIX

WINCHESTER IN LITERATURE

> And as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's eye
> Clothes them with shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.

It is always a pleasing occupation to follow out the associations of human fancy which often invest persons and places with an interest, and indeed a romantic charm, to which the cold-eyed historian or dryasdust critic is entirely unresponsive, and if Winchester as it first appeared to us, as we looked down from the brow of St. Giles's Hill, seemed to throb with the life and interest of a departed age, and of historical personages long since passed away, so too we shall find that it possesses associations of the purely literary type, not indeed fit to challenge comparison with the glorious pageantry of its historic past which we have attempted, all too inadequately, to present upon our stage, but not unworthy to be chronicled and to be included in her volume of romance and

recollection. Her points of contact with literature have been many, and yet it would be wrong to describe her as a literary city. No poet of note, no great writer, has, in recent days at all events, claimed her as parent; her acquaintance has been rather with literary persons than with literature itself, for though she has attracted many to make her in some form or other their theme, but little of real weight in any but ancient literature has first seen the light beneath her auspices. For all this she has, in literature as in life, her story to tell, and that an ancient one.

The first literary associations of Winchester are, as is but natural, historical ones, and the first mention of her in literature is found in Bede, who records for us, among other scanty details, her name, 'Venta, quae a gente Saxonum Ventanceastir appellatur'; she next appears in a full flood of glory, the seat of the learned and literary court of Alfred, from which he gave the world the treasures of his literary efforts — the *Consolations* of Boëthius, Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, Orosius, and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, all rendered into the vernacular, and more important far than all of these, the great thesaurus of early national history, the *English Chronicle*, the history of which we have already related, and from which we have quoted so constantly in our earlier chapters, to be followed by the equally momentous Domesday Book—curious as it may seem to include this among literary productions. Following from this we have a wide and almost

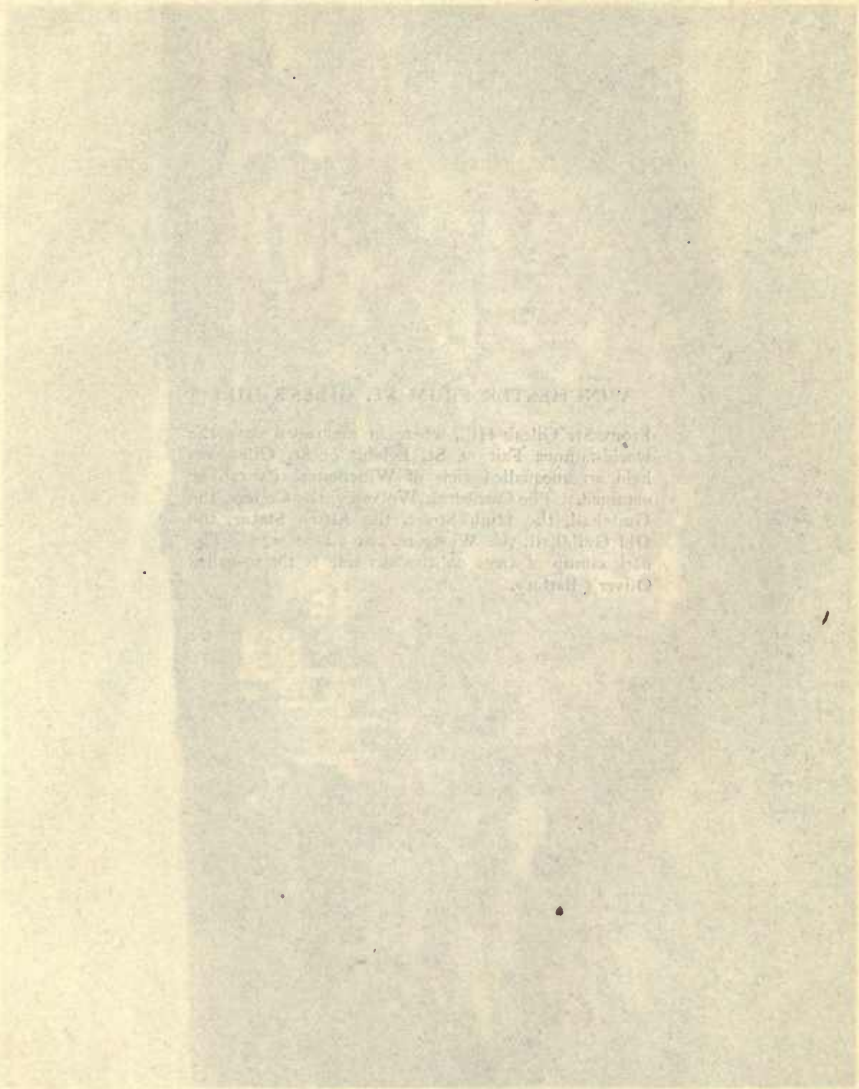
bewildering series of chroniclers, historians, and annalists, some of whom, like William of Malmesbury, Henry Knighton, and Matthew Paris, record details of her career incidentally as general items in the history of the land, while others, like Precentor Wulfstan and the annalists of Ealden Mynstre and Newan Mynstre, laboured at Winchester in their respective scriptoria, producing not merely wonderful works like the *Benedictional* of St. Æthelwold and the *Golden Book* of Edgar, but local histories in goodly store, the Hyde *Liber Vitae* and *Liber de Hyda*, and the later monkish annals of Plantagenet days—Rudborne's *Major Historia Wintoniae*, the anonymously written *Annales de Wintonia*, and others. Prominent among these various chroniclers was Geoffrey of Monmouth, who, romancist and fabricator as he was, has yet rendered valuable service by preserving the British legends as they survived among the Brythonic folk, and has given us—and let us be duly grateful—the Arthurian legend in all its suggestive elusiveness and mystery, centring round Winchester and Silchester, with Arthur the Christian King, Merlin the Mage, Dubric the High Saint, and many another—a legend which passed through many languages and many lands, gathering store of added marvels on the way, the customary guerdon of such literary wanderings, to reappear in strange unwonted guises, as in Layamond's *Brut* and the *Morte d'Arthur* of Malorie. And the legendary lore of Winchester is far from being her least attractive literary asset: we have dealt with this subject fairly fully already—some may perhaps

deem too fully,—yet is not legend but the *alter ego* of history, and are not myth and legend, sober fact and imaginative creation, after all merely the multicoloured strata in the complete rainbow of presentment of vital truth, passing and repassing each into other by nice gradation and imperceptible advance? But all these are but prehistoric as it were, when English as a language was not, and monastic Latin and Anglo-Saxon the muddy media of literary communication.

The Winchester stream in English literature begins to flow at first with feeble current—a distich or so of uncouth verse, or a casual reference, as in *Piers Plowman*, Leland, Camden, or elsewhere. Drayton, in his *Polyolbion*, has some twenty lines or so on the Itchen, referring to the Round Table of Arthur at Winchester, and the towns on her course, speaking of

> . . . that wondrous Pond whence she derives her head,
> And places by the way, by which shee's honoured,
> (Old Winchester, that stands neere in her middle way,
> And Hampton, at her fall, into the Solent Sea),

and Ken and Walton, in later Stuart days, come upon the scene. Ken is a real Winchester possession—educated at Winchester College, and later on, Prebendary of the Cathedral, he wrote his well-known and still widely-used *Manual of Prayer* for the use of the scholars of Winchester College, and his *Morning and Evening Hymns* breathe the same spirit of the inner religious life afterwards so beautifully reflected in Keble's *Christian Year*. His preferment to the see of Bath and



WINCHESTER FROM ST. GILES'S HILL

From St. Giles's Hill, where in mediaeval days the world-famous Fair of St. Egidius or St. Giles was held, an unequalled view of Winchester city can be obtained. The Cathedral, Wolvesey, the College, the Guildhall, the High Street, the Alfred Statue, the Old Guildhall, the Westgate, can all be seen. The dark clump of trees on the sky-line is the so-called Oliver's Battery.

Wells arose too out of his sturdy refusal to countenance the Merry Monarch's irregular life, for he refused to let Mistress Eleanor Gwynne have the use of his house to lodge in, a refusal which angered the king at the time, but conciliated his respect, for on the bishopric falling vacant he declared that none should have it but the "good little man who refused his lodging to poor Nelly." Izaak Walton, Ken's relative, made Winchester his residence during the closing years of his long life—a man of culture and some literary pretension, apart altogether from his immortal *Compleat Angler*, for his lives of Donne and Herbert attained to some celebrity; tradition connects a certain summer-house by the stream in the Deanery garden with him and his fishing, and in several places in his *Compleat Angler* he makes allusion to our Winchester streams, showing that he had ofttimes baited his angle by one or other of its waters. Peace to his soul—he rests in the Cathedral, in Silkstede's Chapel, and the verses over his tomb, though devoid of all literary merit, are said to have been written by Ken his kinsman.

Our next possession is a greater name—and that, moreover, a Hampshire, though not in any real sense a Winchester one—the Hampshire novelist, the most charming and natural of women writers, Jane Austen. Here in the early days of 1817, when a deadly and insidious malady had attacked her, she came with her sister Cassandra to lodge in a house in College Street, occupied then by a Mrs. David, in the vain hope that Winchester medical skill might restore her strength.

Winchester

The following letter from her pen,[1] written at this period, reveals the characteristic *espièglerie* of the writer, which not even advancing weakness could disarm or subdue.

MRS. DAVID'S, COLLEGE STREET, WINTON,
Tuesday, May 27th.

There is no better way, my dearest E., of thanking you for your affectionate concern for me during my illness than by telling you myself, as soon as possible, that I continue to get better. I will not boast of my handwriting—neither that nor my face have yet recovered their proper beauty ; but in other respects I gain strength very fast ; am now out of bed from 9 in the morning to 10 at night ; upon the sofa, it is true, but I eat my meals with Aunt Cassandra in a rational way, and can employ myself, and walk from one room to another. Mr. Lyford says he will cure me, and if he fails I shall draw up a memorial and lay it before the Dean and Chapter, and have no doubt of redress from that pious, learned, and disinterested body. Our lodgings are very comfortable. We have a neat little drawing-room with a bow window, overlooking Dr. Gabell's garden. . . . On Thursday, which is a confirmation and a holiday, we are to get Charles [*a relative—then a boy at the College*] out to breakfast. We have had but one visit from him, poor fellow, as he is in sick-room, but he hopes to be out to-night. . . . God bless you, my dear E. If ever you are ill, may you be as tenderly nursed as I have been. May the same blessed alleviations of anxious, sympathising friends be yours ; and may you possess, as I dare say you will, the greatest blessing of all, in the consciousness of not being unworthy of their love. *I* could not feel this.—Your very affectionate aunt, J. A.

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[1] *Memoir of Jane Austen*, by Austen Leigh, pp. 163 and 164, inserted here by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co.

Poor Jane Austen, the rally was but a momentary one, and an untimely death cut short her career just as she was developing to her best work. She is buried in the Cathedral, where, curiously, the flat stone slab over her body speaks eloquently of her benevolence of heart, sweetness of temper, and Christian patience and hope, but not one word of her literary skill or claims as an authoress—the only reference to these is in the indirect phrase "the extraordinary endowments of her mind." So little was her right place in literature then realized, that some among her friends saw her appearance as a novelist rather with concern than with approval, and her literary ventures were even referred to apologetically. Posterity has amply atoned for this neglect: the Cathedral possesses two memorials of her —a brass and a stained-glass window; and she has long since been admitted to the high measure of appreciation to which her naturalness and sincerity justly entitle her. The Dr. Gabell referred to in the letter was, of course, the well-known Dr. Gabell, headmaster of the College, mentioned in the previous chapter, a characteristic figure famous in his day, a picture of whom, had she been spared, she might perhaps have left us, limned in her own nervous and inimitable manner; but, alas! it was not to be. Fortunately the house she occupied is known, and a commemorative tablet, placed over the door, records appropriately her sojourn there and her untimely death.

Following close upon Jane Austen came another, with a name ever to be honoured in song—a summer

migrant merely, it is true, or rather an autumn one, —whose light was destined to be shortly afterwards suddenly extinguished also. John Keats, the poet, who came here in August 1819 from Shanklin, where "Keats's Green" preserves his memory, for a visit of some two months' duration—"the last good days of his life." Several considerations dictated his visit to Winchester, among others, the desire to have access to a good library, a desire destined, quite unaccountably, to disappointment. His letters written from Winchester are full and charming literary productions: he describes the 'maiden-ladylike gentility' of her streets; the door-steps always 'fresh from the flannel'—the knockers with a staid, serious, and almost awful quietness about them; the High Street as quiet as a lamb, the door-knockers 'dieted to three raps per diem';—in such happy, delicate phrases he hits off the Winchester of the day. Of the place itself he gives us interesting touches: the air on one of its downs is 'worth sixpence a pint'; the beautiful streams full of trout delight him; the Cathedral, fourteen centuries old, enchants his imagination; while the foundation of St. Cross he finds to be greatly abused.

Where he lodged we know not, dearly as we should like to—we can only form such conclusions as the following clues[1] point to:

I take a walk every day for an hour before dinner, and this is generally my walk. I go out the back gate across one

[1] This and the following extracts are inserted here by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co.

street into the Cathedral yard, which is always interesting; there I pass under the trees along a paved path, pass the beautiful front of the Cathedral, turn to the left under a stone doorway—then I am on the other side of the building, which leaving behind me, I pass on through two College-like squares, seemingly built for the dwelling-place of Deacons and Prebendaries, furnished with grass and shaded with trees; then I pass through one of the old city gates and then you are in one College Street, through which I pass, and at the end thereof crossing some meadows, and at last a country alley of gardens, I arrive at the foundation of St. Cross, which is a very interesting old place, both for its Gothic tower and Alms square and also for the appropriation of its rich rents to a relation of the Bishop of Winchester. Then I pass over St. Cross meadows till you come to the most beautifully clear river. Now this is only one mile of my walk.[1]

Another clue, which locates the house very close to the High Street, if not in it, is given by the following:

We heard distinctly a noise patting down the High Street as of a walking cane of the good old Dowager breed, and a little minute after we heard a less voice observe, "What a noise the ferril made—it must be loose."[2]

Winchester streets are less staid and genteel now, and the High Street would hardly echo responsive to such repressed sounds to-day.

Two months only the visit lasted, months of tense compression and rich utterance of song. *Hyperion* (which he never finished), *Lamia*, *The Eve of St. Agnes*,

[1] Letter to George and Georgina Keats, September 21. From *Letters of John Keats*: Sidney Colvin: p. 310.

[2] *Letter to G. and G. Keats*, September 20.

La Belle Dame sans Merci—all these in one form or other came under his pen for completion or revision, while his *Ode to Autumn*, the most perfect of all his odes, was wholly a Winchester production inspired by his circumstances and surroundings. The German poet might almost have had Keats prophetically before him when he sang :

Singst du nicht dein ganzes Leben,
Sing doch in der Jugend Drang !
Nur im Blüthenmond erheben
Nachtigallen ihren Sang.

E'en though after years be silent,
Sing while youthful passions throng,
Only in the fervid spring-time
Nightingales pour forth their song.

But no after years, alas ! were to succeed, and Keats's fervid 'Blüthenmond' was all his allotted span. Winchester is happy in the memory of his eventful connection with her, brief in time though it was.

Our next name is Thackeray, who seems to have loved to locate his scenes in our city and neighbourhood, though in general his references have too little local colour to permit of identification—assuming, that is, that any such local image was really intended.

Vanity Fair and *Esmond* are full of local allusions ; Sir Pitt Crawley, for instance, would appear to derive his names from Pitt and Crawley, two villages close to Winchester ; and in *Esmond*, Hampshire allusions, tantalisingly veiled, it is true, seem to meet and to baffle you everywhere. It seems impossible to avoid identify-

ing Castlewood, with its ruined house battered down by Cromwell, and the Bell Inn with Basing House and Basingstoke ; and while Alton, Alresford, and Crawley are all mentioned, it is round Winchester that interest centres and perplexes most. Where else in literature is a scene so inimitably conjured up and told so charmingly and with such restraint, where else is the real Thackeray so fully revealed, as when Esmond rides on from Walcote to the 'George' at Winchester on the fateful 29th December, and

> walked straight to the Cathedral. The organ was playing, the winter's day was already growing grey, as he passed under the street arch into the Cathedral yard and made his way into the ancient solemn edifice.

Wonderful is the chapter that follows—when Esmond and his 'mistress,' reconciled once more, first become mutually conscious of their love, and the words of the anthem, "He that goeth forth and weepeth shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him," find their joyous refrain in the loving words they exchange.

But where is Walcote? Conjecture would almost naturally settle on Lainston House, some three miles away, the memories of which, in the person of the notorious Duchess of Kingston, doubtless suggested the character of Beatrix the incomparable, the breaker of hearts, the wilful and selfish beauty, did not distance put this out of question. Prior's Barton House, at St. Cross, would fit us better. But the problem is a baffling one, if indeed it has any solution at all.

Of a different kind are the memories which linger round the immediate neighbourhood—the villages of Twyford, Otterbourne, Hursley. At Twyford the poet Pope was sent to school, and in a house close by the great Dr. Benjamin Franklin composed his autobiography; Otterbourne was the birthplace and life-long home of Charlotte Yonge, the high-minded and accomplished, whose books will always be a standard for what is highest and most womanly in fiction—who loved to weave the details of local association with the stories she told so skilfully and well; and on a higher level still we have at Hursley the memories of Keble and the *Christian Year*,—not that Keble wrote the *Christian Year* at Hursley, though his connection with the place as curate commenced before it was completed, but his life-work was in reality here. Hursley Church, practically rebuilt by him from the profits of the sale of his *Christian Year*, is his truest memorial, and the beautiful church and peaceful churchyard, where he sleeps his last earthly sleep, will be ever a spot of hallowed association and pilgrimage. Winchester may be proud of its hymn-writers: Ken and Keble were two, and a third less well known, but certainly deserving to be honoured, was William Whiting, master of the College Choir School some two generations or so back, whose beautiful hymn, "Eternal Father, strong to save," will ever hold a high place in the affections of church-going people.

Following on these memories we have a host of references in modern fiction which centre more or less

definitely round the neighbourhood. Trollope's *Barchester* has been conjecturally identified with Winchester, and there is a wonderfully minute and circumstantial correspondence in *The Warden* between the details of *Hiram's Hospital* and St. Cross. Miss Braddon takes us to Winchester indeed, but gives us little, if any, actual picture of the city. The immortal Sherlock Holmes honoured it also with a visit in the *Adventure of the Copper Beeches*, keeping an appointment at the 'Black Swan,' "an inn of repute in the High Street," and the Cathedral and Close seem to be suggested in the *Silence of Dean Maitland.* Allusions direct, and what seem allusions barely veiled, are frequent, but none can vie in tragic interest and solemn faithfulness with the last awful scene in Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*—when Angel Clare and Liza, her husband and sister, are awaiting the moment of poor Tess's execution :—

When they had reached the top of the West Hill the clocks in the town struck eight. Each gave a start at the notes, and walking onwards yet a few steps they reached the first milestone . . . and waited in paralysed suspense beside the stone.

The prospect from the summit was almost unlimited. In the valley beneath, the city they had just left, its more prominent buildings showing as in an isometric drawing—among them the broad Cathedral tower, with its Norman windows and immense length of aisle and nave ; the spires of St. Thomas's ; the pinnacled tower of the College ; and more to the right the tower and gables of the ancient hospice, where to this day the pilgrim may receive his dole of bread and ale. . . .

Against these far stretches of country rose, in front of the

other city edifices, a large red brick building with level grey roof, and rows of short barred windows speaking captivity, the whole contrasting greatly by its formalism with the quaint irregularities of the Gothic erections. . . . From the middle of the building an ugly flat-topped octagonal tower ascended against the east horizon, and viewed from this spot, on its shady side and against the light, seemed the one blot on the city's beauty. Yet it was with this blot and not with the beauty that the two gazers were concerned. Upon the cornice of the tower a tall staff was fixed. Their eyes were riveted on it. A few minutes after the hour had struck, something moved slowly up the staff and extended itself upon the breeze. It was a black flag.[1]

Poor Tess ! was it necessary for the author to mete out measure thus cruelly upon the children of his imagination—was it kind to Winchester to burden her memories with one so appallingly harrowing, so much in contrast with her quiet peace ?

And yet, after all, is it anything more than retributive justice ? Have not her citizens—those of a generation or so back, at least—been responsible for permitting the one really commanding elevation and landmark she possesses to be marred and dishonoured by this same 'blot,' these obtrusive prison-walls, capped by this self-same 'ugly flat-topped octagonal tower' ? Is not rather the creator of *Tess* displaying a fine and just critical perception in thus exacting from them the full literary penalty for so unpardonable an outrage on the outward attractiveness of their own fair city ?

Such are some of the phantoms which pursue or

[1] Inserted by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co.

elude us as we pass to and fro through the circle of Winchester and its surroundings—yet are they actual phantoms? Have not these seemingly impalpable nothings as complete an identity as the memories and records of the actual happenings of the past? The writer well recollects, after hunting through Salisbury and exploring its treasures of architecture and interest, the delight with which he came upon the old Cathedral organ, now for some years past removed from the Cathedral to one of the city churches, and recognized in it a real bond of relationship — not because it was originally the gift of George III., though that indeed was the case, but because it was the organ on which Dickens's Tom Pinch had played when the Cathedral service was over, and his friend the organist's assistant had permitted him to touch the keys. Not a great circumstance, nor a great character—far from it, —but sufficient to supply the one touch of human sympathy by which soul recognizes soul, and which binds all—past and present, student and subject, reader and author — alike in one. And even as these phantoms, whether of history or legend, of actual existence or fancy, have been conjured up before us for some brief spell, let us, now our task has drawn to a close, bid them adieu with what kindliness of recollection we may :

Come like shadows, so depart.

Index

The titles in black type refer to illustrations.

Adam of Gurdon, 123
Ælfeah, 58
Æthelbert, 32
Æthelred the Redeless, 61, 85
Æthelwold, Bishop, 20, 30, 49, 54, 58, 78, 85, 147, 153, 154
Æthelwulf, 30, 32, 85, 153
Alfred, King, 5, 32, 34, 91, 143, 152, 153
Alfred, a refugee, 38
Alfred, statue of, 42
Alresford, 111, 184
Alswitha, 41, 91, 145
Alton, Pass of, 123
Alwarenestret, 94
Alwine, 71
Anderida, 15
Anselm, Archbishop, 87, 96
Antonine, Itineraries, 15
Arthur, King, 15, 168, 183
Arthur, Prince, 151, 173
Arthur, Round Table, 21, 168, 174, 184
Asser, Bishop, 36, 40
Assize, Bloody, 7, 175
Athelstan, King, 43
Augustine, 21
Aulus Plautius, 15
Austen, Jane, 7, 154, 171, 185
Avington Park, 22

Barons' war, 113
Beaufort, Cardinal, 147, 151, 171
Bede (Venerable), 22
Benedictines, 131
Birinus, 23, 24, 153, 154
Bishop's Waltham, 162, 169
Black Death, 139, 160
Bredenestret, 94
Broadway, 177
Browne, Harold, Bishop, 154
Bucchestret, 93, 94
Burton, Dr., 163
Buttercross, 80, 118, 177

Cædmon, 36
Cær Gwent, 14
Calais, 121
Calpestret, 94
Camden, 143
Castle, Norman, at Winchester, 86, 94, 172
Castle, Brabantine merchants in Winchester, 115
Cathedral, 8, 29
Cathedral of Æthelwold, 56, 77
Cathedral, bedesmen, 4
Cathedral, pilgrims at, 128
Cathedral, preservation of, 77, 155
Cathedral, transformation by Wykeham, 149
Cathedral (Winchester), 23, 146
Celts, 12
Charlemagne, 27
Charles II., 6, 178
Charles V. (Emperor), 6, 174
Chenictes, 96
Chenichetehalla, 96, 177
Chepemanesela, 96, 177

Cheyney Court, 155
Cheyney Court and Close Gate, 112
Chilcombe, 47
Christes Hospitall, 5, 179
Christian Year (Keble), 192
Christianity in Hampshire, 21
Clausentum (Southampton), 15, 18
Close, the, 125
Cnut, 5, 65, 85, 91, 144, 153
Colbrand, 44, 91
Cole, Edward, Mayor, 178
Colet, Dean, 160
College, Brew House, 164
College, Winchester, 145, 158
Commoners, 163
County Hall, 172
Cromwell, Oliver, 172
Cromwell, Thomas, 142
Curfew, 80
Curle, Bishop, 145

Danemark Mead, 47, 91
Danes, 28, 36, 60, 85, 153
Danihel (Bishop), 25
David, King of Scotland, 105
Dean and Chapter of Winchester, 144
Deanery, 145, 155
Deanery, The, 105
De Montfort, Simon, 113, 173
Domesday Book, 72, 80, 92, 182
Domesday (Winchester), 92
Domum, 166
Dorchester, 23
Drayton's *Polyolbion*, 184
Dunstan (Archbishop), 30, 50, 56

Ealden Mynstre, 41, 44, 51, 183
East Gate, 94, 95
Easton, 96
Edgar, 30, 48, 49, 59, 85
Edmund, King, 48
Edred, King, 48
Edward the Confessor, 66
Edward III., King, 120
Edward, Prince, 114
Edward the Elder, King, 43, 91
Edwy, King, 49
Edyngton, Bishop, 147, 151
Egbert, 27, 85, 153
Election chamber, 162
Emma (Ælfgyfu), Queen, 62, 65, 85, 91, 153

English Chronicle, 22, 34, 39, 40, 50, 61, 69, 82, 101, 168, 182
Escheopes, 95
Esmond, 190
Estals, 95
Ethelmar, Bishop, 154
Eton College, 152
Evesham, battle, 114

Feudal system, 80
Flesmangere Stret, 94
Font (cathedral), 100
Fox, Bishop, 147, 151
Franklin, Benjamin, 192
Friars in Winchester, 139
Fromond's Chantry, 167
Fyfhyde, Walter, Abbot, 139

Gabell, Dr., 166, 187
Gardiner, Bishop, 151
Geoffrey of Monmouth, 20, 183
George, 121, 191
George Hotel, 97
Gere (Gar) Stret, 93
Gewissas, 20, 22
Ghetto, 97, 180
Gild merchant, 46, 80, 121
Gilds, 95, 177
Godbegot House, 62
Godbiete, 62, 80, 120
Godfrey de Lucy, Bishop, 111, 147
Godwine, Earl, 65, 66, 85
Godwine, Earl, death of, 69, 153
Golde Stret, 94
Gospel Oak, 22
Grimbald, Abbot, 41
Guild Hall, 97
Guy of Warwick, 46, 91

Hædda, Bishop, 23
Hamble, 32
Hamble River, 40
Hampshire, Christianity in, 21
Hampshire, Victoria History of, 72
Hantachenesle, 94, 96, 177
Hardy, Thomas, 193
Harold, King, 65
Harold II., King, 71
Harthacnut, 65, 85, 153
Hempage Wood, 77
Henry I., 6, 80, 88, 98
Henry II., King, 105, 110

Index

Henry III., King, 6, 111, 154, 173
Henry IV., King, 151
Henry V., 173
Henry VIII., 6, 91, 140, 173
Henry of Blois (Bishop), 22, 64, 92, 100, 154, 168, 171
Henry of Blois, Papal Legate, 102
Heptarchy, 26
Hereward the Wake, 48, 85
High Street, 48
Hoadley (Bishop), 154, 178
Horne (Bishop), 144
Hours, services of, 133
Hursley, 192
Hursley Vicarage, 176
Hyda, Liber de, 45, 50, 54, 183
Hyde, Abbey, 41, 90, 105, 115, 127, 133, 145
Hyde Abbey, dissolved, 143
Hyde, *Liber Vitæ* of, 64, 183

Itchen Abbas, 41
Itchen Stoke, Watersplash at, 89

James I., 6
Jewry Street, 97
Jews, 97
Joan of Navarre, 151
John, King, 6, 111
Julius Cæsar, 15
Judith, Countess, 83
Judith, Queen, 36

Keats, John, 3, 188
Keble, John, 153, 192
Ken (Bishop), 153, 166, 170, 178, 188
Kenulphus (Kenwalh), 23, 85, 147, 153
King's Gate, 95, 98, 114, 123, 130
King's Gate, 73
Kingsmill, William (Prior), 144
Kitchin, Dean, 136
Knighton, Henry, 47, 105, 183
Knights of St. John (Hospitallers), 107, 169
Kynegils, 22, 24, 32, 147, 153

Lachenictahalla, 96
Lainston House, 191
Langton's Chapel, 150
Lanfranc, Archbishop, 77, 88
Leach's *Winchester College*, 167
Leland, 143
Lely, 178
Leofric, Earl, 66
Liberty of Godbiete, 62
Liberty of the Soke, 119
Lisle, Dame Alice, 7, 174
London, 74

Magdalen College, Oxford, 152
Magdalen Hill, 10
Manners makyth man, 6, 158, 166
Martyr Worthy, 80
Mary, Queen, 151
Mary, Queen, 5
Mathew of Paris, 115, 183
Matilda, Empress, 5, 102, 169, 172
Mayor, 119
Meads, 140, 166
Menstre Stret, 94
Middle gate, College, 164
Mirabel Close, 132, 155
Moab, 165
Moberley (Doctor), 163
Monastic life, 130
Morley (Bishop), 154, 170, 178
Mortuary chests, 24, 28, 32, 64, 153
Morys, John, 166, 170

Naseby, 172
Natives and Aliens, 176
Nell Gwynne, 178, 185
New College, Oxford, 159
New Forest, 80, 88
Newan Mynstre, 34, 41, 43, 51, 69, 71, 90
Norman Conquest, 73
Novices, Master of, 135
Nunna Mynstre (St. Mary's Abbey), 41, 54, 98, 104, 109, 118, 145, 183

Obedientiarii, 133
Obelisk, 175
Old Minster, 63, 64, 66, 69
Oliver's Battery, 8
Order of Noble Poverty, 172
Osberga, 36
Otterbourne, 192
Oxford, 152

Palm Hall, 126
Parliament at Winchester, 114
Pass of Alton, 123

Pavilionis Aula, 122, 126
Peter de Rupibus (Bishop), 112, 154
Peter Symonds, 179
Pevensey, 15
Philip of Spain, 151
Piepowder Court, 126
Piers Plowman, 125
Pilgrims, 126
Pilgrims' Hall, 128, 155
Pilgrims' Way, 129
Plague in Winchester, 175
Plantagenets, 109
Plegmund, 43
Polyolbion, Drayton's, 184
Portchester, 10
Portus Magnus (Portchester), 15, 18

Raleigh, 6, 174
Richard of Devizes, 97
Richard I., King, 97, 110, 151
Robert, Earl of Gloucester, 104
Roger Bacon, 113
Rome, Alfred at, 32
Roman roads, 17, 19
Roman occupation, 15
Roman walls, 16
Round table, 21, 168, 174, 184
Rudborne (*Major Historia*), 46, 55, 63, 71, 80, 183
Rufus, 5, 65, 79, 87, 88, 108, 153

St. Æthelwold (*Benedictional* of), 57, 183
St. Alphege, 58
St. Bartholomew, Hyde, church of, 138
St. Brice's Day, 61
St. Catherine's Hill, 9
St. Catherine's Hill, 10, 64, 166
St. Cross, 64
St. Cross, 5, 100, 107, 108, 127, 145, 169, 171
St. Cross, Tower of Ambulatory, 160
St. Elizabeth's College, 140, 145
St. Giles's Fair, 79, 95, 117, 121
St. Giles's Hill, 7, 10, 159, 180
St. John's Hospital, 145
St. Josse, 44, 127
St. Lawrence, 169
St. Mary's Abbey (Nunna Mynstre), 41, 54, 109, 118
St. Peter's, Cheesehill, 57
St. Swithun's Church, 114
St. Swithun's Monastery, 24, 32, 51, 91, 98, 110, 113, 115, 118, 130, 133 144
Sarum, 10
Saxon Winchester, 20
Scowertenestret, 94, 97
Seculars, 52
Senlac, 72
Seventh Chamber, 164
Shawford Mill, 16
Sherlock Holmes, 193
Silchester, 10, 18, 20
Sildwortenstret, 93, 94
Silence of Dean Maitland, 193
Siward (Earl), 66
Slype, the, 145
Snidelingestret, 94
Soke, Liberty of, 119
Southampton, 15
Southgate, 123
Staple towns, 120
Stephen, 6, 100
Stigand (Bishop), 76, 144
Stret bidel, 95
Sustern Spital, 140, 163
Swithun, Bishop, 29, 32, 54, 127, 147, 153, 154

Tannerestret, 94
Tess of the D'Urbervilles, 193
Thackeray, 190
Trollope, Anthony, 192
Tron, 120, 180
Trusty servant, 164
Twyford, 192

Venta, 25
Venta Belgarum, 14, 15
Vespasian, 15
Victoria, Queen, 153, 173
Vikings, 28
Vintanceastir, 25, 182

Walcote, 191
Walkelyn (Bishop), 77, 147, 154
Waltheof (Earl), 83
Walton, Izaak, 153, 154, 170, 184
Wantage, 35
Warton, Doctor, 154
Wayneflete (Bishop), 151
Weald Forest, 12

Index

Weirs, The, 25
Wenegerestret, 94
Wessex (capital of), 20, 153
Westgate, 94, 123, 175, 177
Westminster Abbey, 147
White Ship, 90, 98, 101
Whiting, William, 192
Wilberforce, Samuel (Bishop), 154
William of Malmesbury, 183
William I., 5, 71, 74, 87, 172
William II. (Rufus), 5, 65, 79, 87, 88, 108
William of Wykeham, 6, 107, 139, 147, 148, 151, 158
Winchester Domesday, 92
Winchester, Alfred's death and after, 43
Arthurian legend, 20
Bishop Æthelwold, 49
Capital of Danish Empire, 59
Capital of England, 26
Cathedral, 23, 29, 100, 146, 186, 189
Civil War in, 104
Conversion of Kynegils, 23
Dean and Chapter, 144
Early days, 10
Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, 117
In Literature, 171
Later Norman, 87
Massacre at, 61
Monastic life, 130
Norman, 73
Winchester, Norman castle, 86
Plague in, 175
Roman city, 16
Roman occupation, 15
Saxon, 20
That Joly Citè, 1
Westgate, 40
Winton Survey, 92
Wolvesey, 168
Winchester from St. Giles's Hill, 184
Winchester College Brewhouse, 121
Cloisters and Fromond's Chantry, 137
Memorial Gateway, 144
Middle Gate, 128
Second Master's House, 153
Tower of the Chapel, *Frontispiece*
Wintonia, Annales de, 77, 183
Wolsey, 142, 153, 168
Wolvesey, 8, 39, 59, 85, 98, 100, 102, 104, 118, 126, 170
Wool trade, 120, 180
Wren, Sir Christopher, 178, 180
Wrothesley, Thomas, 142
Wulfstan (Precentor), 53, 55, 77, 118
Wye, Faire, 125
Wykehamica, Adams's, 167

Yonge, Charlotte, 192

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